

THE ROUND TABLE.

A SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, SOCIETY, AND ART.

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SANS CULOTTES AS RULERS.

SINCE we have entrusted to the Great Unwashed the determination of our rulers, we cannot in consistency resent the intrusion of their manners and customs into places of the highest national dignity. It is so much a matter of course that the character of the maker shall appear in his workmanship, that no disappointment could arise from the lack of refinement in representatives of regions whose ignorance approaches barbarism. It would never have required much prophetic talent to foretell that our national, state, and municipal legislative bodies held in time become anything but a source of satisfaction; but no one would, twenty years ago, have granted the possibility of the state of affairs which is now regarded scarcely with surprise, generally with amusement, and rarely with more than a momentary feeling of indignation. The decay of national manners is evident not only in instances, however often recurring, of individual outrages,—in the selection of Congress as a repository for boobies, gamblers, pugilists, generals successful in nothing but rapacity, politicians skilled only in the arts of corruption and demagoguery; in such a scene among the rulers of the first city in the land as that we describe elsewhere; in the supremacy established by railroad and other corporations over the legislatures of half the states; in such blackguardism as fills the gubernatorial chair in Tennessee; in the spectacle of a Vice-President making his inaugural speech while in a state of maudlin intoxication; or of the same man, as President, regaling the world with deportment that might scandalize an average cannibal. Such occurrences as these are striking enough to justify alarm, and are becoming so frequent as to provoke enquiry whether they are irremediable; but it is in the general condition of public bodies that the real working of our democracy can best be seen, and in that there is yearly less room for doubt whither it tends to bring us.

The New York Common Council and similar bodies are representatives of a so much further advanced democracy than exists generally through the country that they are only to be taken as a warning, not as an example of the state of things to which we have as yet attained. A state legislature is a fairer case—a body composed in varying proportion of honest rustic stupidity and of pot-house ruffianism; of stolid, hopelessly ignorant linked with the narrow local prejudice of the clod-hopper, and of the wide-awake sharpness of the gutter politician—a body which awakens in any one accustomed to the usages of civilized life wonder where the one part can have procured the preternatural "Sunday clothes" that displace the blouses to which it is wont, and that the other, with its pinchbeck jewelry and flaming fashions, is allowed salaries for thronging bar-rooms and being glorified in lobbies rather than, clad in particular and suitably shaven, employed at picking oakum within stone walls. Congress, however fallen from its first estate, still contains enough creditable members to remove it far from this condition, and though it sink far below its present state, can hardly acquire the utter contemptibility of a state legislature. But it is already far from being an assemblage which the nation can regard with pride. During its sessions there is a perpetual consciousness on the part of the public that it is liable at any moment to do something scandalous or inconceivably silly. Every day's proceedings give a stronger sense of the intellectual feebleness of a body which assumes an expectant grin as Mr. Thad. Stevens takes the floor, and, like the gleeful lads in the school of the *Deserted Village*, bursts into what the telegraphic reports style "roars of laughter" as his bullying insolence proceeds. Even the Senate, where the decencies of life ought last to linger, found in Mr. Sumner's marriage a theme for mirth which it improved with a zest worthy of the rustic wits who suffer equally

from destitution of subjects for their humor and inability to improve them. Puerile vulgarity seems to have established itself scarcely less firmly at Washington than in the miniature imitative bodies throughout the land. Congressional oratory appears to have died with Webster. In the House, Mr. Jack Rogers, a few weeks ago, amid such cries as may be heard in a travelling circus tent or a country mass meeting, made the only brilliant speech of the session; although in the Senate Mr. Wade—in reply to some remarks of Mr. Sumner's designed to make him (Wade), in his own words, "give it up at once and come down very quick"—achieved a happy retort to Mr. Sumner's likening of congressional labors to Penelope's web by instancing "another ancient sage (*sic*) of whom it was said that he strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel." Still, isolated efforts like these are inadequate to sustain the repute of the body, and congressional oratory is at as low an ebb as congressional statesmanship, sagacity, or decency.

The decline of Congress, however, rapid as it has been, is to be accelerated by the extension of the ballot to ignorance denser than even that of the besotted rabble that throng the New York polls, and no new states, and apparently none of the old ones now excluded, are to be admitted until negroes are allowed to vote. In the Senate debate on the District of Columbia bill, two speeches were certainly direct on the matter of intelligent suffrage. One was that of Mr. Sumner, who very candidly said, "It will not be enough if you give it [the suffrage] to those [negroes] who read and write; you will not in this way acquire the voting force which you need there for the protection of Unionists. . . . As you once needed the muskets of the colored persons, so now you need their votes." This is at least intelligible. By Mr. Sumner's rule, ignorant classes which will vote for the party in power are always to be permitted to do so, whereby, in due course of political reverses, all ignorance will be included. Mr. Hendricks was still more explicit. He likes ignorance *per se*, and thinks that in the North-west "there is a great deal of intelligence among men who are not able to read. They do not acquire their information from books, but from intercourse one with another. . . . They have intercourse with each other, and the one communicates to the other what he knows. . . . and in the course of a generation [to wit, at about the time of their death] many men who are not able to read and write become very intelligent and entirely competent to the exercise of political power." We should be loath to account for Mr. Hendricks's partiality for "intelligence" of this kind by the manner in which his own constituency has shown its competency to exercise political power, but we are far from believing that any one who has noted with what accuracy political information is transmitted even by newspapers will repose much faith in the likelihood that, even in the North-west, men will imbibe by "intercourse" political views of sufficient accuracy to make them reliable voters. Mr. Hendricks, indeed, opposed negro suffrage on the ground that they had not enjoyed adequate facilities for "intercourse;" but it is as idle as it is illogical to make any exceptional exclusion of the blacks, against whom there is no tenable objection which does not apply with equal force to "intelligent" constituencies such as, by the senator's description, exist in the North-west.

New York city has hitherto afforded the chief instance of absolutely ignorant suffrage. The general deterioration we have noted is due to the less glaring evil of what, in fault of a better term, may be termed unintelligent suffrage. Two especially striking exemplifications of its influence are afforded in this winter's New York and New Jersey senatorial elections. The one state, dishonoring itself by the rejection of such a publicist as Mr. Greeley, has preferred to him a young man entirely without eminence and who must needs appear at melancholy disadvantage when contrasted with his defeated rival. In New Jersey—as we write the decision is still in abeyance—there are two candidates. The one—himself a statesman and the descendant of an honorable line of American patriots, jurists, scholars, and statesmen—has attained high professional distinction, has won universal esteem in every department of public and private life, and his election would reflect an honor

to which they are of late unaccustomed upon both his state and upon the Senate. The other is what is termed a "plain" man, a man whose widest reading extends to the political columns of a party newspaper, but whose wealth is highly serviceable to the party of which he is a member, and whose election is a matter of special desire to the Methodist Church, which has of late been asserting itself in New Jersey politics. The moral character of each is unexceptionable, but while one would be an accomplished and influential legislator, the utmost public services to be expected from the other are that he shall regularly fill his seat and vote with his party. Apparently there can be no doubt as to the choice to be made. But Mr. Frelinghuysen's merits are summarily dismissed in every quarter by the remark that he is an "aristocrat," signifying that he is a gentleman, that his speech is grammatical, his manners and presence pleasing, his associations not made at random, his tastes not those of the demagogue, and his fitness for office not proven by flattery of farmers' wives or petting of rustics' children. No other objection, we believe, is popularly entertained; but his opponents are confident that, in that he is "an aristocrat," his fate is sealed. Our democracy has, then, brought us, even in a state whose character for popular intelligence stands as high as any out of New England, to a point where education, culture, and social position are not merely considered superfluities in our law-makers and representative men, but are actually regarded as disqualifications for office—even for such office as is removed from the direct gift of the people. Exactly what will be the standard when the suffrage is still further extended, it is difficult to forecast. If grammatical speech and the manners of a gentleman are now offensive in New Jersey, there seems no reason why the ability to read and write should not, in time, be held, by those destitute of the accomplishments, to afford evidence of presumptuous arrogance unbefitting in their representatives. Indeed, with the examples of the Hon. John Morrissey and the President of the United States before us, it seems not improbable that the time may be near at hand when nominating conventions and constituencies educated by "intercourse" shall find in the qualities that ensure supremacy in village groggeries the best claims to office.

GRACEFUL ASCENT OF THE HEAD CENTRE.

THE "Head Centre" or "Chief Organizer" or Arch Humbug of the Irish Republic has, figuratively speaking, gone up in a balloon. His extraordinary schemes and pretensions have ended just where we, in common with most people of average discrimination, expected them to end—in smoke, but not that of gunpowder. The first of January, it will be remembered, was fixed as the extreme limit of the space ere the volcano should belch forth its fires, when Ireland should be in a blaze from Galway to Dublin, from Londonderry to the Cove of Cork, and when the foot of the Saxon should press the sod of the Emerald Isle no more. But the ides of March have come and gone, and the soothsayer is tumbled from the pedestal to which a too credulous and warm-hearted population elevated him, to be trusted and cheered and glorified no more. The whole affair, which was to have been a pyramidal success, has fallen and frittered and faded away until it is no longer possible for it to be a success even of esteem. All but Mr. Stephens's dupes expected nothing less, but there are, and perhaps always will be, a certain number of people to whom no experience can teach wisdom, and who are ever ready to listen to the voice of a new charmer the moment they have escaped from the talons of the old. It is to be hoped, however, that this lesson will be a salutary one, and should it prove so the defection of Stephens may be the most fortunate thing that could possibly happen for really patriotic Irishmen.

No rule is safer than to distrust men who confidently announce their determination to achieve the impossible—most especially when the accumulation of money is among their collateral objects and when its amount is certain to be proportioned to the general credulity. The behavior of Stephens from his first arrival here has excited the distrust of all who have watched his course and who have not abandoned themselves to a patriotic

self-deception. Now that the absurd bubble has burst and the smarting victims can no longer cherish an excuse for even the slenderest confidence, it is to be hoped that the true friends of Irishmen will seize the opportunity to put them thoroughly on their guard for the future. Relief for Ireland is not to be found in any such measures as those which Stephens affected to contemplate, and sincerity in striving to carry them out, if more noble and satisfactory to national pride than the present wretched *fiasco* can be, most certainly would have ended in bloody and disastrous repulse. As things stand, little is involved save the loss of the money which has been subscribed; and sad as is the spectacle of great numbers of poor enthusiasts being awindled out of their hard earnings by cold-blooded schemers, it is far less horrible than would have been the sights the world would have been called upon to witness had the schemers been truly determined and truly honest men.

No doubt there are some among the leading members of the Fenian Brotherhood who are upright and conscientious persons and who have earnestly at heart the ostensible objects of their society. They must, however, now perceive how impossible it is either to prevent or to punish deception in connection with affairs whose conductors are amenable to no responsible tribunal. Men like Stephens can come hither, stimulate with more or less adroitness a patriotic *furor*, gather their harvest, and retire without being in the slightest degree accountable to anybody or anything, since the law seems powerless to lay hands upon them. It might certainly be supposed that Stephens could be held for fraud in obtaining money under false pretences, but as no such action has ever been hinted at by those who are most aggrieved, the presumption is that the charge could not successfully be maintained. The improbable supposition, too, of his being an agent of the British government commissioned to learn secrets and stir up dissensions among the Brotherhood, even were it established beyond peradventure, would scarcely afford grounds for legal procedure, however it might for unlimited and perhaps justifiable resentment.

Redress for Irish grievances lies in one direction, and in only one. Union is strength on the other side of the sea as well as on this. Political alliance with the English working classes will effect for Ireland, by a bloodless revolution, what secret societies and plundering "head centres" can never by possibility attain save in the doubtful event of a civil war in England itself. Those who love Ireland should look facts in the face now and always, and cease to encourage quixotisms which only excite the laughter of her foes and the tears of her friends. Blunders may be national and expectable, but assuredly rascality is not so; and odium of this sort should be reprobated by every decent Irishman, and, if possible, the offender so dealt with as to discourage similar misdeeds hereafter. A very few years will probably set matters right in Ireland by peaceful means. It is just because all such measures as those in good faith contemplated by the Fenians are most likely, in all human probability, to defer the day of her deliverance that we deprecate and oppose them, and do not survey with unmingled regret either the contemptible attitude of the late "Head Centre" or the ridiculous position of his victims.

OUR VERY COMMON COUNCIL.

"WHOM the gods would destroy they first make mad," and if ever the hackneyed quotation is excusable it may be in its application to the case of the worshipful Common Council of the City of New York. There are things of which the public is cognizant and some of which it is ignorant, and still others of which it has certain hazy suspicions—a confused consciousness that all is not right, without knowing the precise machinery whereby it is put wrong. For instance, the public is well aware that a great many disreputable persons have found their way before now into the Board of Aldermen, the Common Council, and the Board of Supervisors. The public knows that a great many mysterious operations have been effected the ultimate result of which has been to make the said disreputable persons extremely rich. The public knows when a

couple of legislators fight a prize-fight in an empty up-town lot, knows when a great defalcation occurs, and knows how much money is needed to make up the annual tax levy. On the other hand, it does not know the *modus operandi* whereby laws which have been passed to prevent a particular kind of cheating are evaded, and the city plundered more than ever by the payment of judgments for charges which special legislative enactments have forbidden the local authorities to incur. Some prominent men are willing to have the name for the sake of the gain, and, content with stuffing their already over-full purses, they shrug their shoulders at the myriad reports which connect them with civic corruption and malfeasance. But there are other men behind the curtain who are and who long have been robbing this city, yet who would not for worlds let their participation in the various ingenious processes whereby it has been accomplished be known and published. These individuals are like spiders who sit silently and obscurely weaving the webs which entangle the fattest kind of provender. They have supplied the sometimes needed capital and gone "shares" with the active managers who are in office and can pull the necessary wires. Now, the public, we aver, does not know the names of these men nor the tools with which they work. Certain flagrant jobberies have been exposed in various prints, from penny dailies to *The North American Review*, but the names of the secret concoctors of these schemes, the receivers of the lion's share of the plunder, have been decorously veiled, or have probably been unknown to the different writers themselves. This state of things will not be permitted always to continue. The days of the Common Council may be, and probably are, numbered, as are also those of the Board of Supervisors. But the names of the dark-lantern personages who have grown rich through their swindles must by no means be permitted to pass into oblivion. The public does not yet know these names, and it will certainly be very much astonished when it comes to hear them. But hear them it assuredly will, for such evil doings cannot remain for ever concealed. These persons cannot retain their good repute and the city's money too. They must either disgorge the one or forfeit the other. We give them fair warning, and stand ready to enforce one of the two alternatives. Let the guilty swindlers tremble and in good season shape their conduct accordingly. The brand when it comes will be no light or effaceable one, and the social damnation which it will involve will be a bitter price to pay for the gold they refuse to restore.

But, to return to the Common Council and its premonitory insanity, it really seems very congruous and satisfactory that it should have graced its last moments by the episode of January 10. The newspapers have already told us how the deliberations of these august governors of ours broke up in a grogshop fight; how, according to *The Herald* report, one councilman hurled an inkstand at the head of the president, accompanying the act by the remark, "Take that, you scoundrel!" and how "a member who was sitting near him replied (*sic*), 'You ought not to have done that;'" furthermore, how pistols were drawn, and, a protracted row being imminent, the police interfered and carried these potent, grave, and reverend signiors before the Mayor, who told them, very properly, that he was ashamed of them, and that it was "too bad that gentlemen (*sic*) banded together as you are for the purpose of legislating for the city cannot transact your business without throwing inkstands and drawing pistols." The president appeared, we are told, with his face smeared with ink, and it seems that he had promptly drawn a pistol at the very beginning of the fray. The origin of this precious disturbance was, as might be expected, a quarrel about the division of spoils, and, as also might be expected, the participants were dismissed on their own recognizances on promising not to fight any more for the immediate present.

That this outrageous procedure will have great effect at Albany we have little doubt; and although it may be questioned whether our Legislature is so very far superior, either intellectually or morally, to our Common Council, it has at least the power, constitutionally or otherwise, to abolish the latter body altogether. We shall probably now see this done; but

although, upon the general principle that things cannot be worse, we may be disposed to rejoice in a change, it cannot be denied that such legislation will be diametrically opposed to the spirit of our institutions. It will not, we presume, be denied that our city functionaries are the choice of a great majority of the voters, or that, inferably, their action is therefore consonant with the popular will. *By what right, then, is the city to be thus disfranchised?* If the majority requires vile, dissolute, ignorant brutes, either in the Common Council, the Legislature, or the national Congress, what right have the minority to complain, still less to interfere? If self-government can be taken away from New York upon any given pretext, why can it not be taken from other cities or counties upon either similar or different ones? The truth is that there is no philosophical or constitutional solution of this dilemma which is consistent with adherence to democratic dogmas. If there is any occasion when the right of self-government can be withdrawn from a portion of the people, it is impossible to interpose any theoretical distinction between such a process and that of withdrawing the right from all portions upon every occasion. It may be said that there are a large number of Irishmen in New York who persist in voting for bad men, and that the fact justifies an exceptional interference. But is there any law which sanctions so discriminatory a process against particular nationalities, or which forbids them to mass their numbers where they please? If not, it is difficult to see where such legislation, once begun, is likely to end.

If the moral and intellectual tone of a community are such that it demands to be represented by members of the criminal classes, it may be a matter for regret, but, consistently with democracy and the principles of manhood suffrage, it is not one for interference. It will scarcely answer to have a free republic for the country and an enlightened despotism for the town, even if the town be made by the operation a much more comfortable place to live in. A very striking argument against such attempts will probably be found to consist in the refusal of the town permanently to submit to them. The desperate evils which have lately reached a semi-ludicrous climax may reconcile many to a policy which is, however, essentially illogical and unsound; but it is a great mistake to suppose that such acquiescence will be lasting. We may be driven to a variety of temporary expedients; but the questions involved in this issue are of a very grave and weighty character, and will require to be approached and treated in a spirit and with a comprehensive and patriotic sagacity such as have not yet in our judgment been brought to the task. For ourselves, we are very much disposed to the conviction that the substantial remedy for our civic troubles will lie in a judicious curtailment of the suffrage, rather than in the hazardous expedient of governing the American Metropolis through the invidious machinery of commissions from Albany.

ROUND DANCES.

THE rosy Divinities that preside over and determine the diversions of society have nodded their ambrosial brows; from some far-off Olympus of Fashion the fiat has gone forth that is to regulate the season's dancing. The galop and *valse à deux temps* are to reign supreme, the polka—shades of our ancestors!—being voted slow, and square dances as usual only tolerable to fill up interstices, give room for rest and introduction, and afford the melancholy wall-flower a brief distraction from the pangs of supper deferred.

Round dances of the most rapid variety will certainly rule the giddy hour. So about this time, as the almanacs say, we may look for a renewal of the annual crusade against them, wherein they are written down in the press and shown up in the pulpit with a pertinacity of zeal and a unanimity of abuse which it must require very considerable vitality to survive. Perhaps the relentless and Reverend Mr. Smyth, when he shall have left *The Black Crook* to haunt its unprofitable shamelessness to empty benches, may beat for them the battle-roll of his drum-ecclesiastic. Yet even his assault, judging from the past, the votaries of Terpsichore may await with serenity. In the face of the bitterest opposition the popularity of the round dance has steadily increased. If here and there some fair worshipper, smitten by the whisper of conscience or constrained by parental scruple

ples, has reluctantly fallen from the ranks, there are a score as fair as she to fill her place. The waxing prosperity of our fashionable dancing-masters must be a perpetual thorn in the side of those worthy folk whose sombre joy it is to depict them as unrighteous ministers of Baal, and their innocuous fiddles as most potent instruments of sin. Perhaps it may be worth while to enquire into the causes of this continual conflict, and to weigh the objections to an amusement so graceful and apparently so conducive to health. Probably we can render our fair readers no more grateful service than by sweeping away those rose-leaves of doubt that have troubled the repose of many a tender conscience.

Let us then frankly admit that, as at present practised, the round dance is not all we should like to see it. Abuses have crept in which, to a certain extent, almost justify the acrimony of its assailants. The national restlessness and energy, our "Go Head," as Jules Janin would graphically style it, has infused itself into our dancing, changing the graceful undulations of the waltz into the merest saltatory scramble, and then banishing it entirely for the headlong velocity and excitement of the *deux temps* and the galop. Our dances, like our dinners, like our lives, are races against time. And perhaps in our green and salad days we do clasp our partners a trifle closely. Yet the most rigid moralist might pardon to the vivacity of youth an excess so venial and so inseparable from abundant and joyous vitality. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* A lady will know how to pick her partner; and, for the rest, the mere publicity and conventionalism of the thing are sufficient to counteract any impropriety. Actors tell us that the most passionate stage embraces are, from this very cause, devoid of excitement. And experience teaches—those who have tried it—that the measurement of a pretty girl's waist in a dark corner gives a very different sensation from the same process in a brilliant ball-room. There are minds, indeed, so cankered as to scent out in virtue itself a kindred taint; so microscopically morbid as to see only impurities in the clearest water. Passions so mercurial as to rise on the warmth of such innocent caresses, will, of course, find it more wholesome to abstain. But because we are virtuous shall there be no more cakes and ale? "Many will not allow men and women to dance together," says quaint old Burton in his incomparable *Anatomy*, "because it is a provocation to lust; they may as well with Lycurgus and Mahomet cut down all vines, forbid the drinking of wine, for that it makes some men drunk." But waiving all this—granting that this sort of thing is as reprehensible and immoral as Mr. Pecksniff insists—it will still be found on enquiry that precisely those features of round dancing most deservedly denounced are most foreign to its conception. In Germany, the birth-place of the galop and the waltz, they are strangers to that wild and passionate abandon which marks our perversion of them here. All is graceful, gradual, decorous. The gentleman's hand never encroaches beyond the middle of his partner's waist, nor the lady's higher than her cavalier's elbow. The movement of the waltz is as dignified and undulating as the motion of a swan upon the water. It is the boast of an Austrian officer to waltz as he will ride, holding in his hand a goblet of champagne and spilling not a drop. And some of the best waltzing we have seen in this country was at the German balls in the Bowery. We are calmly aware that the statement is shocking; we are serenely indifferent to the vast consumption of sal-volatile it is doubtless inducing; we are atrociously content to be called a wretch; but the statement is entirely true. And so our fair readers may assure themselves by going almost any night in the season to Germania Hall. We can promise them the sight, at least, of more genuine enjoyment than can often be seen at more pretentious and brilliant assemblies. These two things our Teutonic neighbors certainly understand to perfection: how to enjoy themselves and how to waltz. Their galop is, of course, more rapid, but is still very far from the delirious whirl into which it has degenerated in our salons. But these abuses are easy of reform; there remains another and more serious charge to answer.

Though dancing be, in itself, invigorating and healthful in the highest degree, yet too often, we must confess, it is exercised amid surroundings which go far to neutralize its benefits. The atmosphere of our drawing-rooms, crowded to suffocation, ill-ventilated at best, and speedily choked with dust, is commonly unfit to breathe toward the close of a large party. The fault in this case is about equally divided between the architecture of our houses, which carefully ignores the somewhat vital necessity of air, and the indiscreet vanity of the hostess, who will invite more than she wants, or can possibly make room for, just to be even with that hateful Mrs. Jones. When will ladies get it through their dear, unphilosophical

heads that the space which fifty people uncomfortably fill will scarcely furnish dancing room for five times the number? Saltation in such a jam becomes simply an acrobatic squirm, not to mention the incidental deluges of struggling up three flights with refractory salads and elusive jellies to a partner in the garret. Our fair readers may do much to remove this reproach. Invite (for a beginning) not more than twice as many as your rooms will hold, or thrice the number you can provide with supper; and, abolishing for ever the abomination of crash, give us the only proper and endurable dancing floor, well waxed boards. But little more time is needed to take up the carpet than to put down the crash, and the vast increase of comfort will amply repay the trouble. Then, having done your possible, as the French say, we can only pray that a watchful Providence may, in his own good time, suggest to our architects and builders the usefulness of air as a means of prolonging life, and the possibility of constructing a habitable house that shall not be sealed as tight as a sarcophagus. Who will inaugurate the reform?

Apart from these drawbacks, which are entirely extrinsic, there is no exercise which more fully combines the *utile* and *dulce* of the classic poet. Developing the form, giving strength and activity to the muscles, grace and litheness to the carriage, it is well calculated to relieve our ladies from the necessity and reproach of a resort to those aids to curial symmetry whose mysteries were revealed in a former issue of this paper. In this respect the round dance is greatly superior to the square, which is at present, little more than a modulated walk of various and elaborate stupidity. Even as a mere recreation it is worthy of generous esteem. "I hold it an honest recreation, if it be opportune, moderately and soberly used; I am of Plutarch's mind 'that which respects pleasure alone, honest recreation, or bodily exercise, ought not to be rejected and condemned.' I subscribe to Lucian: 'Tis an elegant thing, which cheereth up the mind, exerciseth the body, delights the spectators; which teacheth many comely gestures equally affecting the ears, eyes, and soul itself.'" Indeed, considered in its æsthetic regard, it is difficult to understand how any one who has ever yielded to the delicious intoxication of the round dance could raise a voice against it. A thousand blissful memories would plead for it; ghosts of all the buried flirtations to which it gave ephemeral life would rise in its defence; bright eyes, clustering curls, tender smiles, thrilling whispers, would reproach him from the past; more potent still, the remembrance of the rapturous moment when, thanks to its kindly aid, his arm first trembled round the waist of the divinity so long worshipped at a distance, would complete the conquest. No; the thing is impossible. So we have an irresistible if ungenerous impulse to question the motives of those who attack it. Probably ignorance or physical disability is at the bottom of nine-tenths of their diatribes. It is a failing of humanity to depreciate pleasures in which participation is denied us. Had not Byron been lame, the *Waltz* would very possibly have remained unwritten. The feeling is comprehensible; sour grapes hang from the fairest vines. Lucifer peering into Paradise through the palings was scarcely moved to feelings of immoderate philanthropy. And we of a wiser generation, whirling through the ecstatic mazes of the galop or the waltz, may well forgive the envious carplings of the thrice unhappy whose feet have never trod our Eden.

RICH SNOBS.

ONE of the greatest evils which threatens a republican society is its constant tendency to encourage an aristocracy of mere wealth and to stimulate the habit of despising all excellence whatsoever that is not associated with it. The evil is aggravated when the society is not only democratic but new. Were England to become a republic to-morrow, there would still be plenty of snobs there, but the snobbishness of a ruling class which refuses to honor anything but gold would still be looked for in vain. A poor poet with a threadbare coat and not a shilling to bless himself with, will often, on the sole condition that he presents the appearance of a gentleman, be welcome at tables which would exclude the richest traders of the city. This would not be altered by making the monarchy a republic. It is a condition of things which in no wise is dependent upon political distinctions. Cultivation, refinement, delicacy, the air of good breeding, respect for the feelings and tastes, and even the *amour propre*, of others, the thousand nameless things that make up what we call a *gentleman*, are the requisites for admission to the charmed circle, and not all the gold piled up by Mr. McCulloch in his treasury could gain recognition without them. In France the respect offered to culture and intellect in the highest circles is at least as

marked as in England. It is useless to say to the refined world there that a man has the wealth of Rothschild, of Girard, or of Peabody. The question is, Is he a *gentleman*? If not, the wished-for privilege is denied, the enchanted circle is not for him, and his sole resource is to mingle with his own kind in the hard rough world without.

Now, it is the custom in this country to claim a certain superiority over the usages of the Old World in this, that we value men for what they are; that we care nothing for aristocratic distinctions; and that in this very point of exclusiveness our habits are not only more generous, but more comprehensively equitable and Christian, than those of European nations. If this were really true, we should surely have something to felicitate ourselves upon. But what in reality is the fact? Simply this, that we certainly eschew titular distinctions, and assume, or affect to assume, that a duke is no better than a simple trader; but that we set up, instead of those aristocratic distinctions, and instead of the refinement and education which abroad put those who possess them upon a common social level, a mere money qualification, which is of all others the lowest and basest which can possibly control the usages of society. Political life being for the most part undesirable, and service in the army, save in rare and exceptional instances, being not of a nature to attract, the accumulation of money becomes, in the absence of other and more varied ambitions, the sole object of nearly every man in our community. That it should gradually get to be thought that he is the best man who has gathered the most dollars, ceases to be remarkable when we consider the peculiar conditions of our social atmosphere. The effect of this sordid standard is perceptible in the manners and conduct of almost every individual we meet, varying, of course, according to character, manliness, and self-respect, but giving so pervading a tinge as to be fairly estimated as a national characteristic.

Without doubt there are gentlemen everywhere, even in the worst of places, and if the prince of darkness is one, others may be found in the Sixth Ward or even in the Board of Councilmen. There are gentlemen even in a community of gold-grubbers. There are men among us ever gracious and thoughtful of others, incapable of idiotic conceit and self-assertion even if they amass millions, kindly, just, and generous even to people who have done them favors, and not to be changed even in the very sirocco of gold-dust. But unhappily these individuals are not numerous. There may be, and probably are, quite as many good hearts under a democracy as under any other form of government. But it is certainly true that a democracy whose cardinal pursuit is mere wealth does not breed tact, and does not prevent a diffused contempt for the very finest qualities of intellect and culture as bases of respect and consideration. Your rich man here may be as ignorant as a pig; he may go about with filthy linen and dirty nails; he may notoriously be mixed up with transactions which the whole world knows to be dishonest and infamous; but for all this society will practically tolerate and in most cases will court, honor, and flatter him.

The knowledge of this—and we have seldom known a rich man who was not swift to find it out—has the effect, which a child might predict, of making most men of wealth who began poor arrogant, self-sufficient, and untrustworthy; in a word, the effect of making them unmanly snobs. They seem to think—and every one who knows New York can find a head to fit the cap to—that the mere fact of their possessing wealth justifies them in being insolent to all who are poorer than themselves, in making promises to further certain ends and then breaking them or indefinitely deferring their fulfillment at their own good will and pleasure, in violating all conventional rules of politeness and good behavior, and, in general, in making themselves troublesome and disgusting. To harass and insult those who have the misfortune to be at once better educated than themselves and in their power appears to be regarded by these rich snobs as a cardinal duty; and it is almost safe to assume that they will worry and torture whomever they get in their clutches just in proportion as they know or suspect them to be their superiors in birth, in refinement, and in consequent gentlemanly feeling. Such practices it is hardly necessary to claim must prove most demoralizing to society. They drive men who are capable of better things to a species of desperation which leads them to resolve that they will get money at any and every cost, in order that they may no longer be subjected to such indignities. The result is that the community becomes, as we have suggested, tinged with the same common color. Each one's hand is for himself and against all others. Charity, kindness, forbearance, mutual help, are swamped in the mad race for wealth or crusted hopelessly over by a grasping, reckless selfishness. Such is the pass we are

coming to, and there will be fewer and fewer who stop short of it as time rolls on unless some occult remedy can be devised whose nature is as yet non-apparent. Perhaps a Society for the Discouragement of Rich Snobs might do some good, but fear or interest would, it is to be apprehended, prevent most of those who might be efficient members from joining it. At present the only obvious resource would appear to consist in everybody's scrambling together dollars as fast as possible, to the end that we may do at Rome as Romans do and all become rich snobs together.

FLIRTING ON SKATES.

FLIRTIATION may be an evil, but the world, or that portion of it which is blessed with common sense, has pretty well made up its mind that it is a necessary one. So long as the sun and moon shine and the stars run in their accustomed orbits—so long as we are actuated by those inflexible necessities which a bounteous Providence has planted in the breast of humanity—so long as women are fascinating and men susceptible, flirtation will continue one of the things which is and which, therefore, presumably ought to be. It is surely not so grave a thing as love, or, of course, so grand and glorious a thing. But then without it love would scarcely ever visit us at all. It is the beautiful and roseate forerunner of the nobler and loftier passion which, like the sun itself, may afterward illumine a long and steadfast day of life or haply be darkened by the clouds of misunderstanding, of incompatibility, or of misfortune. The little god, like an able general, throws out his skirmishers in advance to feel the enemy's position, and often with results as happy in averting calamity as in paving the way to victorious assault. Assuming, then, that flirtation is inevitable, it becomes a matter of legitimate interest to enquire what are its least hurtful conditions or under what circumstances it may be indulged in with the minimum of disadvantage to those who feel irresistibly impelled to explore its mysteries and to plunge into its hazy world of often fleeting intoxications.

Modern civilization has brought all manner of new provocatives and furnished all manner of new opportunities for the delightful pastime, and whether a greater proportion of marriages be the fruit or not than of yore, it is certain that the chances are sufficiently augmented. People of good degree now flirt in the fashionable promenade to a degree which, when the pavements were not, would have been quite out of the question. They flirt in theatre and opera and concert-room in a way which before the era of gas and open auditoriums would have been, if not impossible, at least very difficult. They flirt, moreover, in the omnibus and the railway carriage, on steamboats and in parks, whereas a hundred years ago such facilities were denied save, in the latter case, to a few and favored localities. They flirt, too, vigorously at croquet, and even at billiards and other semi-muscular sports whereat our grandmothers would have stared with wonder and thought the end of all things was verily close at hand. The old-fashioned opportunities of balls and dinner parties and morning visits, meanwhile, still remain; so that all ancient avenues for flirtation are preserved and countless new ones are opened. Some of these, whether new or old, may be objectionable, and love-making for hours on a winter's evening in the heat of a pestilential stove is fairly to be reckoned as one of the number. But if any method or scheme of flirtation can be pronounced free of most objections—if any presents the valuable feature of uniting health with fascinating pleasure—if there is any which cannot be repudiated save by those who denounce flirtation altogether *per se*, it is the exhilarating modernism of flirting on skates!

What can be more charming than a bevy of pretty girls, their cheeks all aglow with blushes of that exquisite sort which is richly heightened by genial exercise, becomingly clad in warm and radiant colors, and flying over the glittering ice like so many Atalantas, pursued by their eager and admiring swains? Each pulse is bounding with health, each laughing eye is beaming with pleasure and mischief, each dainty figure is rounded with hearty and vigorous respiration, and every look and movement is instinct with the consciousness of doing something innocent yet pleasurable, and looking most lovely while doing it! Surely if American girls would but skate enough, whether they unite flirtation with the sport or no, the sad complaint of physical delicacy and degeneration we have heard so much of might soon fade away, and at last be heard by a succeeding generation with incredulous surprise. We will warrant too that flirting, to whatever reasonable lengths it might be carried, would interfere no whit with wholesome and robust development. The truth is that whatever is morbid or

unwholesome in the mind, no less than in the body, is almost sure to be regulated and expelled by active physical exercise and plenty of it. Flirtations which are most demoralizing are those which are carried on by the pallid, the weakly, and the morbidly sensitive. Your stout, brave girl, who walks or skates her ten or fifteen miles a day, is the one least likely to forget her self-respect in her intercourse either with the opposite sex or her own. The law which leads us to look for sound minds in sound bodies operates in amatory matters with a force at least as great as in any others. Flirtations born of the heated atmosphere of the ball-room or theatre may lead to harm at times, as most things human do; but those whose soft nothings are breathed on skates are, we will be bound, as little hurtful as aught on "the dangerous edge of things" can possibly be.

UNCERTAINTIES OF LOGIC.

It is time we came to the conclusion that there is very little under the sun of which the human mind can be absolutely sure. We grope about in uncertain glimmers of light; we are deceived by our senses and by delusive aspects of things around us; we see as often the creations of our fancies and prejudices as the real objects before us. And of all our human faculties there is none that deceives us more often than our boasted reason.

It has been the pronounced purpose of logic to reduce reasoning to an exact science, so that it could never lead us astray. The first thing accomplished by logic has been to prove that, if a certain thing is true, then it is true. If two and two make four, then undoubtedly they make four, and not twenty-two, as has been claimed. Of this class of reasoning are Mr. John Brougham's oracular lines,

"What must be will be,
And what has been was;"

and also many of the statements in Goldsmith's poem of "Mary Blane." The next step, and the highest step which logic has attained, is to prove that if a certain thing is true, then another thing is true. There is still an "if" in the proposition. This sort of reasoning is, upon the whole, a great triumph of the intellect. It is illustrated in Hudibras' remarkably acute reason for wearing only one spur, wisely knowing that if he could stir one side of his horse into an active trot, the other side would be likely to go along at the same time. But it is better illustrated, perhaps, by that memorable dog, always mentioned in books of logic, which, while following his master, came to three roads, and having discovered by his nose that his master had not taken the first two, trotted off on the third, relying this time on logic and not on scent. The reasoning in this case may be stated thus: If a man has taken one of three roads, and if he has not taken the first two, then he must have taken the third. But there was no certainty that he had taken either of them, for men often turn aside into the fields; and a truly intelligent dog, we submit, would have given due weight to this possibility.

In such cases as these, however, logic is very well. Epictetus being asked what was the necessity of logic, said, "Would you have me demonstrate that it is necessary?" "Yes," was the reply. "Then I must use the demonstrative form of argument." "Granted." "But how will you know whether I argue sophistically?" On this the man was silent. "You see," said Epictetus, "that logic is necessary, as without it you cannot even tell whether it be necessary or not." Yet it must be admitted that anything is not necessarily true because it has been apparently demonstrated to be true. Logic, in itself, may be a perfect science; but in the hands of imperfect men it cannot be used infallibly. Sometimes the mere double use of a word misleads us. By a very plausible syllogism a cat is said to have three tails. No cat has two tails; a cat has one more tail than no cat; therefore a cat has three tails. Of course the major premise here is strictly false; because a no cat, being a nonentity, has no tail, much less two tails; yet in our loose way of speaking it seems correct enough. Granger, who was remarkably ugly, proved that he was the handsomest thing in the world. "The handsomest part of the world," said he, "is Europe; of Europe, France; of France, Paris; of Paris, the University; of the University, the College of —; in the College of —, the handsomest room is mine; in my room I am the handsomest thing,—*ergo*, I am the handsomest thing in the world." One of the most puzzling pieces of reasoning, however, was that by which it was shown that a man running ten times as fast as a tortoise could never overtake one a mile in advance. While the man is traversing that mile, the tortoise, of course, has traversed one-tenth of a mile; while the man has passed over this one-tenth, the tortoise has gone one one-hundredth of a mile; while the man has passed over this, the tortoise has traversed one one-

thousandth of a mile; and so on as far as figures will admit, or the imagination can go; the tortoise always being some fraction, however small, of a mile in advance. It would naturally occur to the illogical mind that there would come a time when the space could not be divided into a fraction, from the fact that there would be no space left to divide; but you cannot demonstrate it by logic. Here is a well-known sophism which comes back upon itself in a very perplexing way:

No rule holds true without some exceptions.

But this very remark is a rule.

Then it has exceptions.

Then there are rules without exceptions.

We would be likely to consider it an axiom that a statement must either be true or not true. Taking this as his starting point, the lawyer asks: "Is it true or false that you have ceased beating your wife?" "Why," the witness says, "it's neither true nor false." That strikes every one as absurd; the judge thinks the witness stupid. The witness sees the way out of this easily enough; but oftentimes judges do not. Any day in our courts one may hear an acute lawyer make some such unfounded assumption as this, and demand almost with insolence an answer, "Yes or no, without equivocation." Either answer would be untrue. This is one of the commonest and most effective tricks of lawyers for confusing witnesses. On the other hand, according to the sophism of Eubulides, a statement may be both true and false at the same time: "If you say that you lie and say so truly, then you do lie; but if you say so falsely then you speak the truth. In either case, therefore, the same assertion is both true and false."

That is a very self-evident and convenient principle of logic which declares that of two contradictory propositions one must be true and the other false. But the troublesome question that arises is, which is the true and which the false? There is no sort of doubt that it is just as easy to prove one side of a theoretical question as the other. In young men's debating societies it is the ambition of the best speakers to get on the wrong side of a question, because there is so much better opportunity for bringing forward ingenious and convincing arguments. The confession of the Irish judge, "I believe you are both right," is the secret thought of every jurymen where able lawyers are opposed to each other. With all the facts of the evidence before them, the jury are bewildered by the arguments of lawyers, and disagree, or follow the lead of some man with a stubborn idea in his head, or come to a compromise for the sake of getting rid of incongruous perplexities. The story has intrinsic evidence of truth, of the prisoner who burst into tears on trial, and, being asked why he wept, replied, "Ah! sir, it was not till I heard my counsel's defence that I knew how innocent I was."

While it is so easy to prove anything by sound argument, we have no respect for quibbles. That was undoubtedly a smart but a no less perversely-minded sailor boy who made three ends to a rope: "Here is one," said he; "here is another; now, here's the third," and he threw it overboard. Similarly, the youth who, pointing to a pair of chickens, argued that there were three on the plate. "Here is one, ain't it?" "Yes." "This is two, ain't it?" "Yes." "Well, don't one and two make three?" We think the parent rewarded him properly by replying, "Well, your mother may have one, I'll take the other, and you may have the third for your dinner." The manner in which denials and affirmations are made in lawyers' papers, with a total disregard of the consistency of the several parts, is very amusing. An exaggerated instance was the answer put in by a Vermont lawyer in a suit for damages done to a kettle which the defendant had borrowed of the plaintiff: "1. There was no such kettle. 2. We never borrowed it. 3. It was broken when we got it. 4. It was whole and uninjured when we returned it." After the same manner was the denial of the story that General Hooker had been left immensely rich by the death of a Mexican wife: "1. General Hooker's wife was not rich when he married her, nor at any other time. 2. General Hooker's wife was not a Mexican. 3. General Hooker's wife is not dead. 4. General Hooker never had a wife. 5. General Hooker is not a Croesus, never was, and never will be." This denial, of course, was written before General Hooker's recent marriage. One would suppose that there must be something absolutely certain in such well fortified statements as these; yet we are prone to doubt all things.

The world is divided among good, honest, clear-headed, reasoning people whose convictions diametrically oppose each other in all sorts of theories, and especially in politics and religion; all of whom are able to advance the most convincing reasons that they are right. Every one of them seems to know whereof he speaks; their vision is clear, not one of them sees as through a glass darkly.

A fair discussion with equal talent on each side, instead of resulting in any agreement or in convincing any one that he is wrong, invariably results in rivetting still more strongly the convictions previously entertained. Two statesmen, belonging to opposite parties, can give you each an impregnable argument in favor of his platform and his candidate. Undoubtedly there is truth somewhere, but it lies at the bottom of a well; and too often looking down into the well we see the reflection of our own face and the faces of those who are looking in with us rather than the truth which is there. Reading past histories, from which passions and prejudices have cleared away, we are sometimes able to see the right and the wrong. But there are questions of theory and metaphysics concerning which philosophers have argued through all the ages; yet concerning which nobody is any the wiser. The Irishman's description of metaphysics is quite correct: "Two men are talking together, and one of them is trying to explain something he don't know anything about, and the other can't understand him."

If this is true of questions of theory, what shall we say when a great thinker tells us that "there are more false facts than false theories in the world"? What we call a fact is generally something that has merely been demonstrated by our senses; yet in what infinite ways has it been proved that our senses deceive us. The commonest discovered truths, such as the revolution of the earth, are deemed impossible and absurd by those who judge only by the senses. We cannot prove that a cat has only one tail. We can only say that it seems to us that she has only one, the same as it seems to us that the sun rises. We talk about time as though it were a fixed fact. Now in a world that turns topsy-turvy as this does there can be no fixed facts. Go east or west and our timepieces become demoralized; and it has lately happened that we hear of occurrences in Europe an hour or two before they happen. We speak of "up" and "down," yet if we follow them through the earth to China our "down" there points "up" into the sky. We say we see a thing; yet we do not know what light is, and therefore do not know how we see it. When we look into water, a stick reaching into it seems much shorter than it is the fact. There may be similar delusions in the air about us. In gazing at the moon, we should say that it seems to us as large as a plate. Now, it does not seem to us anything of the sort. It seems to seem so, but it really does not seem so. To the naked eye, the moon is not as large as a pea. A photograph of it by a telescope, magnified fifteen times, is only about an inch and a half in diameter. Look at the moon through a spy-glass magnifying eight times, and you think it seems smaller than to the naked eye. But put one eye to the glass and open the other, and then it seems to the naked eye about as large as a peppercorn, and through the glass about as large as a penny. When it is rising, the moon seems to seem twice as large as when high in the sky; yet it does not. A thought goes through your brain, "I will lift that rock," and instantly your hands begin to tug at it. Can you explain what there is about that thought that should set those clay-made arms in motion, or why the same mind should not be able to set any other material thing in motion? We can only dimly judge that it is in the same way that God, the Great Mind of the Universe, moves all the worlds and all the forces of nature. For several thousand years men have supposed that they had only five senses; yet a Frenchman has been born into the present century who insists that we have six. He claims to have "discovered" another sense. When we tell the weight of an article by our hand, it is not the sense of feeling by which we do it. It is by this sixth sense—the sense of weight—the muscular sense. So this preposterous Frenchman would even try to convince us that, while we have been judging by our senses all our lifetime, we did not even know how many senses we had!

From all this we should learn that though all things are inflexible and eternally true or false, and though it is our duty, and should be our pleasure, to find out all we can, yet that all the lights by which we judge are imperfect, delusive, unsatisfactory, circumscribed, and we should more and more acknowledge our fallibility, and be neither boastful, arrogant, nor positive in our assertions. Though we have reasoned the truth of our convictions to ourselves all the days of our life, and have the right to maintain them, there are others who have come to opposite conclusions also through the reasoning of a lifetime; and though we study day and night, we are obliged to accept many things upon belief rather than upon demonstration. The eye of a simple and loving faith can see about as far into the "eternal verities" as the eye of sense or reason; and those who throw

"The burden of the mystery,
The heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world"

upon such a faith are, perhaps, as happy and as wise as mortals can be.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editors of THE ROUND TABLE, desirous of encouraging bold and free discussion, do not exact of their correspondents an agreement with their own views; they, therefore, beg to state that they do not hold themselves responsible for what appears under this heading, as they do for the editorial expression of their opinions.

LONDON.

LONDON, December 29, 1866.

THE dissatisfaction of the public with the management of the Atlantic cables which has shown itself during the past week in numerous letters in our public journals is certainly not without good ground. It is tantalizing to think that the hauling up of the old cable, over which we rejoiced and banqueted, and knighted and barouched, and wrote high-sounding leading articles, has not produced one atom of practical benefit. But it is not easy to see how the public are to help themselves. It is the old story over again of the planters in the Dutch East India Islands, who, as Adam Smith tells, used to destroy the greater part of their spice crop to enhance the value of the remainder. It is a thing we see every day. It is not long since I saw an engraving advertised with a guarantee to purchasers that the plates should be destroyed after the first two hundred impressions. So we had a short time since an elaborate statement from a statistician here to prove that railway fares might be reduced throughout Great Britain sixty per cent. with only a trifling loss, if any, to the companies. Of course, if this were true, the companies will not move. Where is the motive? So now with the Atlantic Cable. Suppose it could be demonstrated that the two cables, working all the twenty-four hours, could earn as much by a rate of half a crown as by a rate of ten shillings; why should the directors trouble themselves? You must show them that they will earn more if you would have them consult the public interest. Meanwhile, see what the world loses. Here you have it confessed that the cables are capable of doing seven times the work which they now get through. Clerks are idling; six thousand miles of cable, the fruit of so much labor, cost, and perseverance, is silent six-sevenths of its time, while the papers get no news. As this is the case even under the present system of signals, it is no wonder that Captain Bolton and his code and Thomas & Snell with their short-hand system are dismissed, on what may be called the "previous question." The directors have no occasion for their new-fangled devices. So far from wanting to get through their work quicker, it would save them the annoyance of public grumbling if they could spin it out over the day with any decent show of activity. The problem they have to solve is neither that of sending many messages nor sending few; neither that of cheap telegraphy nor dear telegraphy. They have only to find the exact mean of supply and demand, the precise scale which, be it high or low, be it founded on the principle of small profits and quick returns or on that of large profits and slow returns, will, on the whole, and after all deductions made, return them the largest annual dividend. Nor is it easy to see how we are to get any relief. Our companies have, if I remember rightly, the monopoly of the right to land cables at Newfoundland, a very objectionable item in their powers, but it is too late to complain of that. But even if your proposed companies succeed in laying cables by other routes (I see there is the same thirst for monopoly among your speculators as there is here, but Congress will, I hope, keep this in check), he must be of a sanguine temperament who hopes to see a permanent rivalry for the public favor. At first there may be something of this kind, but there can never be many companies, and there will come a time, in the inevitable course of these things, when the shareholders will ask themselves what they get by competition—or cutting each other's throats, as they call it—and will combine, tacitly or avowedly. Then we shall have, I suppose, the spectacle of three or four, or perhaps five or six, cables all working such a short-time system as was hardly known to our Lancashire mills in the height of the cotton famine. The problem of how to make five or six cables do only half the work of one will be solved to the satisfaction of all parties interested in the joint concern, and the old and new worlds will be as far off as ever from having a really effective communication by telegraph.

Some opponents of free trade principles may, perhaps, say here, "What! has your *laissez faire* doctrine brought you to this? Is it possible that free competition has only made something that the world wants excessively dear, and led to a system almost too wasteful and absurd

to be believed?" But, in truth, the free trade principle, as most of its advocates admit, does not really apply unless there can be effective competition. And what competition can there be where it is so easy to combine and to monopolize, and where the motives so to do are so powerful as they are here? It is obvious that there can be no remedy for these things but in the assumption of the whole business by government, or by some other body acting as trustees for the public. Who cannot see that in the important matter of international communication it would be better for the public interest to be cheap at a small loss than to be dear for the sake of a trifling gain? But this is a question that can never be considered by a company of speculators. We have had lately many rumors of an intention on the part of government to take the whole of the telegraph lines. A similar question was discussed last year with regard to the railways; but nothing came of it. And in neither case has there been, I believe, any serious consideration of the matter in high quarters. But these questions, and some others of a kindred kind, will have to be considered. Mr. Gladstone is the only man from whom we could hope for a wise treatment of the subject and a resolute determination to carry out reforms; and, if I mistake not, he will not have long returned to power before we shall hear farther on this subject.

Edmund Yates, in a recent comment upon Mr. Thomas Hughes's letters from London to *The Tribune*, says they do "not contain any news beyond what the readers of *The Tribune* could gather from other parts of the paper; for Mr. Hughes knows well enough that if he were to do more than parody the reports of the English newspapers—if he were to avail himself of his position, and write what people talked about and what was likely to occur—he would be held up to infamy as a violator of the decencies of social life who earned his living by listening at keyholes."

This is true enough. English writers of Mr. Trollope's class are fond of accusing the American journals of being given to betray facts assumed to be private; but it may well be doubted whether we are not a little too squeamish on these matters. Any way, it is curious to observe how capricious our notions are on these points. Every day we have abundance of personal details published which cannot in any way be called public affairs. There is our *Illustrated News*, which publishes every Saturday particulars of wills of illustrious persons just deceased. One of the gravest charges against Edmund Curll, the secondarily publisher of the days of Swift and Pope, was that he published the wills of public characters which he had obtained by paying a fee at the will office—thereby, as Swift said, adding one more to the appointed terrors of death. But nobody ever thinks of censuring *The Illustrated London News*. On the contrary, to judge from the way in which our highest class journals quote the family particulars of how much my Lord Baresacres has left to the Lady May, and how much to the Honorable Richard and John, I may assume that they regard it as altogether blameless. Yet it is quite certain that people's wills are not exposed to the public gaze for a shilling in order that they may be published for the amusement of the curious. Mind, I do not say that the practice ought to be forbidden either by law or opinion; but I note the anomaly of the impunity with which this custom is admitted, while others certainly less reprehensible are reprovied. When Mr. Thackeray died, *The Times* came out the next morning with a very particular account of his being discovered dead; of the aspect of his chamber; of what passed between him, his family, and servant on the night before, and much more. Nobody said *The Times* was wrong. A clever writer here once brought down an avalanche of censure upon himself by describing Mr. Thackeray's smoothly-shaven face and the broken bridge of his nose, "the result of an accident in his youth;" yet by Mr. Thackeray's own act copies of his photograph fully revealing these strictly private particulars were at that very moment on sale for a shilling in the windows of every stationer's shop, in London. I confess to having been one of those who bought one and who felt an interest in being reminded of the closely-shaven face and the nose with the broken bridge. I even fancied I discovered relevancies and peculiar fitnesses between those features and peculiarities and certain idiosyncrasies of Mr. Thackeray's genius. I had even prepared a neat essay on this subject, in which the "objective" and the "subjective" and the "abstract" and the "concrete" played no small part; but was warned just in time by the fate of the unfortunate writer referred to—though it never struck me before that what a man might sell for a shilling, and another might buy and look at and talk about in "society," was a thing that nobody must mention in print. But so it is. And yet, I say again how inconsistent we are. Here are our medical journals con-

stantly publishing, after some important man's death, not only a minute account of his sufferings, but a very elaborate report (you may see one often quoted even in lay journals) upon the whole internal economy of the unfortunate deceased. If anything be sacred about a man, if anything be peculiarly his own affair and nobody else's, one would think it is his liver, kidneys, and intestines generally. But you may publish all about them under the very eyes of his bereaved family, and not a finger shall be raised.

Yates's remark, however, touches upon a point of more importance than the question of what is and what is not lawful to be said about people in print. It is this, that there are numberless things very proper to be said, and which, indeed, it is a duty of somebody to say, but which nobody dare say unless he lives out of the world; for, as a rule, the anonymous in journalism is a mere delusion. Who writes everything here is as well known to all whom it concerns as if the writer's name was appended to the articles. How can Mr. Dallas or Mr. Dacent or Mr. Arthur Locker or Dr. Wynter or Charles Mackay review a book honestly in *The Times*, or how, at least, can he point out its defects, when he is as certain as anything in the world to know the writer and to meet him continually? Really, both journals and contributors, if anonymity is worth anything—and that it is, none who have really considered this subject can doubt—should endeavor to provide some more effectual means for making it a reality. Mr. G. H. Lewes, in his farewell "causerie" upon resigning the editorship of *The Fortnightly Review*, the other day, put forth a peevish and not very consistent complaint upon this subject. He told how his review (it has notoriously failed, by the way) was founded upon the principle of signed articles, the only true and sound principle for a review. Well, there is something to be said for this view. It is quite true that the anonymous is used often enough where it is effectual—and of course we are not considering the case in which it is not effectual—to gratify private malignity; but a watchful editor might generally keep a check upon that. One would have thought, however, that a philosopher like Mr. Lewes would have tested this question in some way by its relation to the public interest. Have not mankind a deep interest in the sincerity and honesty of writers?—which we know in practice, say what we will about our plain-speaking character and so forth, cannot be secured, as a rule, unless the individuality of the writer is merged in that of the journal. And does not this go a long way towards settling the question?

It is curious that, while Mr. Lewes is thus pleading for the public right to know who it is that is philosophizing and criticising, he is exceedingly angry with those writers who will not respect a *nom de plume*, or who persist in speculating upon the question of who is the author of an anonymous work. He thinks if the writer desires to remain unknown the public should forbear to enquire. But he admits that the general practice is against his view, and I will undertake to say that it always will be. It is, no doubt, a great pity when a man publishes an *Ecce Homo* or a *Vestiges of Creation* that people should set their wits to work to find him out and unmask him, and subject him to the odium *theologicum*, and all that; but a rational man will not regard such things as transgressing the rules of fair play. Our fathers speculated on the question of who was the author of *Waverley*, and came generally to a correct conclusion, although the fact was not established until Scott avowed the authorship. It would have been a pity to have deprived society of so exciting a topic or so good an exercise for their ingenuity, and if they can find out by fair means they have the right to do so, and there is nothing in good morals to the contrary. Let them guess and speculate; it is the writer's fault if they get proof. I was told the other day, in company here, that I am the writer of the letters signed "Q." in *THE ROUND TABLE*. Well, of course I am; I do not mind admitting it here, but I replied to my detector in a way which I think might possibly qualify me to become a follower of Ignatius Loyola. But I am getting egotistical. I am not a Junius, to declare that I am the sole depositary of my secret and that it shall perish with me. If anybody can detect me and prove it to his own satisfaction, I promise him there shall be no whining from me; only I will not confirm him until I choose.

And now, having put in a plea for publishing personal anecdotes, let me end this letter with a story of Thomas Carlyle. I heard Mr. Dickens tell it the other night in a company of fifty; and if he may tell it to fifty, why may not somebody else tell it to fifty thousand? That great man (Carlyle, I mean) is still grievously tormented by some Cochinchina fowls kept by a neighbor. They crow not often but at unseasonable times—in the midst of a particularly involved sentence, for instance, requiring

great attention to the logical ordering of accusatives and verb. The philosopher is at such times, to put the case mildly, simply no philosopher at all. Exasperated, at length, beyond measure by these daily tormentors, he sent a servant to his neighbor the other day to implore relief. But the neighbor was unyielding. He, or rather she, regarded the fowls with peculiar affection, and declared, besides, that she had observed that her pets, though they certainly crowed very loud, "only crowed three times in an entire day." "Aye, so they may," remarked the author of *Hero Worship*, when this reply was brought to him: "so they may: but the woman does not consider the awful torments I suffer when expecting them to crow." Is not this characteristic of the man? Q.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

LUNAR CAUSTIC.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: Mr. G. Washington Moon has a criticism in the last number of *THE ROUND TABLE* which displays him in a new phase. Having, by his lucky exhortation of Dean Alford, won the reputation of a good philological critic, he now tries hard and well to approve himself a consummately bad poetical one. His choice of subject is most admirable. No poem in the language could more fitly than the *Atalanta in Calydon* exhibit Mr. Moon's "varied incapacity." It says just what he does not appreciate in just the way he does not understand.

He begins by laboriously expounding through half a column what Poe says better in a sentence—that there is a difference between the expression of obscurity and obscurity of expression. For his example of the latter he pitches on the *Atalanta*, and, to do him justice, is chivalrous enough to choose for attack three passages which unphilologic criticism has reckoned among the best. Mr. Moon's grand objection to all these passages, which he repeatedly asserts and amply proves is that he does not understand them. Now, there are very obscure passages in the *Atalanta*; but these are not of them, as I hope to explain even to Mr. Moon. His first difficulty is with the lines—

"Goddess, whom all gods love with threefold heart,
Being treble in thy divided deity."

Here Mr. Moon feebly and collaterally makes the only real point in his entire criticism—the unusual, and perhaps objectionable, use of "treble" for "triple." This is evolved from a cloud of verbal captiousness wherein the grammarian instinct fairly runs riot. It seems to be his delight to show how many ways he has of misunderstanding. He scents out and hunts down every possible or impossible ambiguity, and worries and mangles the unlucky passage out of all semblance of life or beauty. If Mr. Moon really wishes to get at the sense, I would suggest: 1. That the word "heart" is figuratively used and stands for "love"; 2. That, however painful to his feelings, he may be kind enough to refer the participle "being" to the noun "goddess," instead of the noun "gods"; 3. That puns on the word "treble," however amusing, will scarcely help him to a correct understanding. In short, Artemis—*diva triformis*—goddess of three separate aspects, is loved under each of these aspects. Where is Mr. Moon's trouble? If, amid a cloud of his own raising, he finds himself "utterly in the dark" and plaintively calling on the Davenport Brothers—*lucida sidera*—for "light on the subject," Mr. Swinburne is hardly to blame. After so complete a muddle one is less surprised when he next boggles at

"A hand
To all things fierce and fleet that roar and range
Mortal, with gentler shafts than snow or sleep."

And here he gives us a delicious little bit of analysis, so characteristic that the reader must positively enjoy it with me. "I puzzled for a long time over these lines," says our critic, "before I was satisfied that I had discovered the meaning. At first I read that the hand was, to all things, fierce and fleet. So far the reading seemed plain. But then I asked myself what could be meant by the things being said to roar and range mortal? I could not even guess. At length it occurred to me to read the last line first, and by that strange process I arrived at what I believe to be the author's meaning." That is, by the "strange process" of reading the sentence through Mr. Moon came to understand it! Many have doubtless been through such an experience, but few are the Dogberrys who would print it.

After considerable subtle raillery against Mr. Swinburne's hapless goddess, Mr. Moon humorously but credibly sets forth his blissful ignorance as to what the remainder of the invocation may mean; but he is even more unfortunate in what he understands than in what he does not. For there is one thing he does understand: the earth is to laugh. At any rate, that is funny. What is the sea to do—and the winds—and the fountain heads—what are these to do? Are they all to laugh? These queries are left to the readers, and evidently as posers. Really, to find the man thus transfixing with the spear of his inimitable humor this luckless metaphor of the earth's laughing, tempts one to wonder whether a surgical operation be not as necessary to get a figure into Mr. Moon's head as a joke into a Scotchman's. Has he ever read Horace, "*Ridet argento domus*"? or Catullus, "*Ridete est quicquid domi cacinorum*"? or Ovid, "*florumque coloribus omnis Ridet ager*"?

or Moore, "The valley lay smiling before me"? or a thousand other instances which don't suggest themselves *currente calamo*, and which nobody has hitherto found so funny? Our own Scriptures, which Mr. Moon has read and which have inspired in him correct verses, he must find ludicrous enough in parts: "The sea saw it and fled." "The mountains skipped like rams and

the little hills like lambs;" and numberless places in Isaiah, Job, and the Psalms must, by his criterion, be irresistibly comic.

Leaving verbal criticism, our grammarian now recklessly pursues his strictures *ultra crepidam*. His next quarrel is at last with an idea. Mr. Swinburne is gravely heretical in his notions of the origin of man. He spurns all our critic's constituted authorities; he contumaciously declines to be guided either by Sambo, Dr. Darwin, Mother Goose, or Mr. Moon; but "to the great astonishment" of the latter rushes off in a heathenish dithyramb of "jingling nonsense," which previous critics have till now mistaken for deep and genuine poetry. Of course, from such a man nothing but blasphemy was to be looked for; nor can any orthodox person do otherwise than Mr. Moon—"leave Mr. Swinburne to settle that account with his Maker."

The head and front of Mr. Swinburne's offending is that his pagan Greeks talk Greek paganism instead of English Christianity.

To have failed to appreciate the profound artistic truth of this; to have read the *Atalanta in Calydon* so utterly amiss as to lose its grand fundamental idea—the intense dreariness of the old Greek conception of God, which Mr. Swinburne has there so wonderfully wrought out—is the severest sentence any critic could pass on himself. So far as this his disquisition goes, Mr. Moon seems to have missed faults, excellences, spirit, and all. Of its sinewy Saxon English, of the sensuous splendor of its rhythm, of the singular power and beauty of its imagery, of its pervading pathos, he has no word to say. To the criticism of the boldest and most original young poet of the day he has brought a rare faculty for misunderstanding, and a habit, let us hope, still rarer, of throwing philologic dust into the eyes of his common sense and then detailing its gropings. He is a polisher of mosaics passing judgment on the architecture of a temple.

Yet perhaps, after all, I may have misunderstood Mr. Moon as sadly as I have accused him of misunderstanding Mr. Swinburne. It is possible that what I have mistaken for a serious criticism is only an ingenious satire, a playful *jeu de esprit* to lighten the tedium of graver studies. As I glance over the article again, I see many things to strengthen the conjecture. Mr. Moon's previous reputation as a critic, his curious citation of authorities—spiritual mediums and omnibus-drivers, Ethiopian tradition and nursery legend—justify the suspicion that your critic has been perpetrating a huge "goak." For his sake and credit I would fain believe it so, and am content to be the victim of this second Moon-hoax.

Very truly, etc.,

D. A. C.

JANUARY 8, 1867.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: *De gustibus non est disputandum* is a saying not less truthful than trite. Every day we see and hear abundant proof and illustration of it; from the Irishman's love of the Mackaway pig to Mr. Moon's antipathy to Swinburne's poetry. We had formed a very favorable opinion of Mr. Moon, as a philological critic, upon reading his remarks on good grammar, etc., in the previous numbers of *THE ROUND TABLE*. But we especially commended and admired his rough handling of the pedantic dean and his pedantic English. So far, so good. As an *art-critic* Mr. Moon is not a success. He is like a fish on dry land—out of his element. He is one of those very square, sharp-cornered persons who very often get into round holes, according to the oriental phraseology and fable. Had he, in his criticisms of Swinburne's immorality, confined himself to his province and proved consistent, all would have been well; but instead of criticising Swinburne's immorality, as he designed doing, he entered upon a laborious discussion of his poetic powers and genius, while he merely touches his theme in a few lines toward the end of his effusion. This is very like the modern lecturer who announced as his subject *The Genius of Edgar A. Poe*, and thereupon proceeded very elaborately to discuss the poet's love of intoxicating liquors. In this remarkable criticism of *Swinburne's Immorality*, Mr. Moon chiefly attacks the poet's *obscurity*. We would beg to remind him, in the first place, that there are two kinds of *obscurity*—one of language and one of thought. The former cannot be too strongly condemned, while the latter is often unavoidable, and results from the poverty of language itself. Great men, and especially great poets, are rarely, if ever, guilty of *obscurity of language*; but they are very often guilty of *obscurity of thought*. Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats, and Tennyson have fallen into this error, if that can be called an error which is not their own fault but the fault of the language they use as the medium of thought. As an object seen through a dark glass appears indistinct, so a thought or idea seen through obscure language may appear indistinct or obscure. Does Mr. Moon forget, or did he ever know, that there are thoughts for ever haunting the minds of men and for ever eluding their grasp, as the ever-changing summer cloud evanesces beneath the touch of the painter's brush? Does he forget, or does he know, that it is toward the expression of these indefinable, evanescent, and beautiful thoughts that the spirit of modern poetry is aspiring? If he does not know this—if he cannot sympathize with the spirit of his age, and appreciate and acknowledge its expression—he has no right to appear before the literary public as a "self-constituted judge of poetry."

In the second place, we would remark that poetical *obscurity* may be *objective* or *subjective*, the former lying in the poem, the latter in the reader of the poem. It is possible that the *obscurity* which Mr. Moon finds in Swinburne's poetry may be discovered in looking nearer at home. It would be, perhaps, superfluous to add any more, but we will append, in justice to Mr. Swinburne, that Mr. Moon has been very careful to select from *Atalanta in Calydon* all the most obscure passages he could find, and to pronounce his verdict accordingly. We would fain remind him of the fate of *Zoilus*, the ancient

critic, and the judgment of *Midas*, the unfortunate. 'Tis well for him that he was not a contemporary of either.

Yours very truly,
G. S. H.
JANUARY 8, 1867.

THE ALDRICH-SWINBURNE CONTROVERSY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: I have followed with much interest the discussion in your columns on *Aldrich vs. Swinburne*. To renew it now would be idle were there not underlying it a question of far more serious import than the mere originality of this or that author. Whether Mr. Aldrich is or is not a plagiarist chiefly affects Mr. Aldrich himself. Though, to be sure, considering that no less an authority than *The London Athenaeum* has pronounced him the foremost of our younger poets, it somewhat concerns the honor of American letters to relieve him at least from the reproach of going abroad to deprecate, as though, like the Scotch moss troopers, he found nothing worth stealing at home. But it is a graver matter that such an accusation should be levelled at an author of repute on grounds so very insufficient as are set forth in the article on *Metaphysics of Plagiarism*. I have not seen *The Boston Advertiser*, but if, as I gather, its defense of Mr. Aldrich was based on a question of time, that gentleman may well cry, Save me from my friends. To put in such a plea implies that it is the best possible defence; yet it was so easy to show the entire inconsequence of the charge that, if it was not done, the wonder that it was not is only equalled by the wonder that such a charge should have been so made at all. In fact, it seems to me that your contributor has signally failed, on his own showing, to make good his case.

His argument turns on the alleged identity in both poems of what he calls the rhythmic-imaginative effect. "The rhythmical collocation of Swinburne," he says, "has been followed with trifling variations by the author of *Mountain*—a collocation which is novel and original." Now the rhythm of *Mountain* is evidently dactylic as your contributor says, *ex. gr.*:

"In the place | forest | Guarded by | shadows," etc.

It is exactly described as a succession of unrhymed Adonics—a verse consisting of a dactyl and a spondee. Many of them are as good imitations of the classic article as can be framed from our naturally iambic speech.

"Leth the | haunted,"
"Light the | snowflake,"
"Into the | woodlands,"

not even Poe could object to. The *Madonna Mit* should therefore be also dactylic in rhythm. And so your contributor would make it appear, scanning it, "if," as he guardedly says, "scansion be possible," thus:

"Under green | apple boughs | That never a | storm will rouse," etc.

I am only surprised that he should have had a doubt of the possibility of such scansion. Let us put these dactyls to the test of accentuation, on which our English metrical system is based. Our English dactyl is an accented syllable, followed by two unaccented. So we have

"Under green | apple boughs | That never a | storm will rouse | My lady | hath her house | Between two | bowers," etc.

Here, in four feet out of seven, the accent is made to fall on an unemphatic word, or a naturally unaccented syllable; and these lines are the best for his purpose that your contributor could have selected from the entire poem. Mr. Swinburne never put forth such dactyls as these. He is too good a classical scholar and too accomplished a master of metrical effect. The rhythm is plainly, even obtrusively, iambic, with scarcely a variation except on the quoted lines. For instance, take the four lines which immediately follow:

"In e't | her of | the twa'in | Red ro's | sea full | of rain; | She ha'th | for bo'd | wom'en | All k'nd | of fo'wers."

This rhythm is combined into stanzas of eight lines, consisting each of two rhymed triplets of iambic trimeters separated and concluded by two rhyming iambic bimeters. In not a single feature does this metrical arrangement resemble Mr. Aldrich's unrhymed and successive Adonics; and to claim for it either novelty or originality would probably surprise no one more than Mr. Swinburne himself. Possibly a score of poets have used it before him. It is exactly the metre of Longfellow's *Skeleton in Armor*, excepting the double rhymes of the bimeters and the greater freedom of the latter in admitting dactyls, and Mr. Aldrich, in his poem called *Castles*, has only missed it by a foot and a half. I remember seeing, many years ago, in *Putnam's Magazine* a rather striking poem styled *Tuloom* with the same stanza collocation and the converse (trochaic) rhythm, used also by Mrs. Hemans in her *Dirge at Sea*, thus:

"When the night is wild and dark,
And a roar is in the park,
And the lightning to its mark
Cuts the gloom,
All the region in the sight
Rashes upward from the night
In a thunder crash of light
O'er Tuloom."

To its author, by the way—one Erastus W. Ellsworth—should be accredited the sonnet beginning "Robert of Gloster, in an old romance," etc., quoted in your issue for December 1. With the disappearance of this fancied rhythmical likeness, the corner-stone of your contributor's ingenious fabric is demolished. Whether or not there is in the imagery and general imaginative effect of the two poems that resemblance which he discovers, those who have read them may judge. I confess myself unable to see it even from his carefully collated extracts.

But I have not troubled you merely to point out this error in an otherwise able article. It was because I wished to protest against the readiness of American criticism to fasten imputations of plagiarism on American authors. It began with Poe, whose famous discussion with "Outis" concerning Professor Longfellow and another Aldrich, this present one mildly recalls; and yet Poe has demonstrated that poet and plagiarist are incon-

sistent terms. The true poet, he contends, so assimilates and makes part of himself whatever is beautiful or sublime in another's thought, that it takes new growth in his own mind, and so at last blossoms, entirely his own, into the fulness of speech. Surely the critic has a nobler office than hunting to the death every real or fancied coincidence he chances to unearth. A very little ingenuity will make out a plausible case against almost any author. For example, Mr. Walt Whitman had perhaps never read a line of Catullus when he published his first book; yet one might easily prove, to his own satisfaction, that the address *To a Common Prostitute* owes the inspiration of its subdued indecency to the more unblushing obscenity of Catullus's atrocious *Clarmen 32 Ad Ipsithillam*. But what service would be rendered to the cause of letters except from the possible event of Mr. Whitman's or his *prochain amie's* probably able reply? wherein, let us hope, the purulent prudery of the animalcule who could make such a charge would be properly and scathingly rebuked. Of a truth, the crime of deliberate literary larceny by authors worth the trouble of exposure is so rare as to be practically null. I only recall two instances, both prose writers, where the charge seemed to be brought home. The first is in Bulwer's novel, *The Cartons*, which *Fraser's Magazine* long ago showed to be made up in great part from *Tristram Shandy*; and the other *Griffith Gaunt*, which was traced to various sources in a recent number of *THE ROUND TABLE*. Yet in the face of this ignominious detection, *The Cartons* is still ranked among Bulwer's very best efforts; and *Griffith Gaunt* will doubtless fare no worse, at least on this score. In fact, we are very ready to condone a crime which serves up to us in palatable shape the marrow of a tiresome or forgotten work. And the magic of genius can impart a certain originality—what your contributor discriminatingly calls the originality of imaginative effect—to a combination of borrowed details. Gray's *Elegy*,—a perfect cento, is a case in point; Shakespeare is full of it. In short, and to conclude this overgrown letter, I would suggest as a prominent article in our critical creed, calculated to spare much heart-burning and recrimination, that the plagiarism which improves on what it borrows, is not deserving of very serious censure; while the other sort is pretty safe to die a natural death without the useless stimulus or trouble of detection.

Very truly, etc., etc. C.

OLD NEW YORK.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: On reading Mr. Tuckerman's interesting life of Doctor Francis, prefixed to Widdleton's edition of the doctor's *Old New York*, I found some singularly careless statements, to a few of which I beg leave to call your attention. I do not know how many more there may be, as I read the book in haste and with but a moderate antiquarian knowledge of New York. We are told, on page xvi, that the *New York Directory* for 1789 was a pamphlet of eighty pages—on page xvii, that Pitt's statue (erected in 1770 at the junction of Wall and William Streets), was standing in 1789—on page xx, that the Richmond Hill mansion was situated on the corner of Varick and Light Streets—that the tomb of George Frederick Cooke, the actor, is in the graveyard of Trinity Church (same page)—that the monument to Lawrence is near St. Paul's Chapel (page xxi)—that Governor Morris's eulogy on Hamilton was delivered from the portico of St. Paul's Chapel (page lxxv)—that the thirteen trees which Hamilton planted at his country-seat, the "Grange," in memory of the thirteen original states, were *elm*s (page lxxv)—and that Franklin experimented with electricity in the belfry of the "Middle Dutch Church," now the post-office. Unless our local historians are greatly misinformed, all these statements are erroneous. The *New York Directory* for 1789 (and 1790) is in two duodecimo volumes. Pitt's statue (or rather what remained of it) was removed, after the evacuation of the city in 1783, to the Bridewell yard, thence to the yard of the Arsenal near the Collect, whence it was transferred to the Museum Hotel on West Broadway. It now reposes, I believe, in the rooms of the Historical Society. Doctor Francis never saw it in its original position, as he was not in existence till 1789. The Richmond Hill mansion stood in Charlton Street, near Varick. The tomb of Cooke is within the pale of St. Paul's, and the monument to Lawrence, as everybody knows, is close to the steeple of Trinity. And it was under the portico of old Trinity that Morris delivered his eulogy. The trees which Hamilton planted at the Grange were, I believe, *gum trees*. So says Doctor Francis himself in *Old New York* (page 33), hinting withal that the tree was chosen on account of the symbolism of its *star-shaped* leaf. I wish that the story of Franklin were true; and every lover of old New York will join me in the wish that this pleasant anecdote could be added to the many interesting associations that cluster about our venerable and shabby post-office. But alas! it rests on no weightier evidence than an uncertain passage in the correspondence of a most uncertain man—Cadwallader Colden, last of the royal governors. Franklin himself says nothing about it, and his biographers are equally silent.

Since writing the above, I have glanced at Mr. Tuckerman's article on *Broadway* in *The Atlantic* for December. He makes therein few references to New York history, but I find in them the same carelessness. He tells us that *Fort Amsterdam* was built by Wouter Van Twiller, "where the Battery now is." The truth is that what is now the Battery did not exist in the time of Van Twiller, nor till long afterwards—almost the whole of it from State Street westward having been at various times reclaimed from the river. It would be more accurate to say that the fort occupied the site of the block of houses bounded by Whitehall, Bridge, and State Streets and the Bowling Green. A little further on we have this singular passage: "The rebellion of Leisler marks the en-

croachment of new political agencies, and the substitution of Pitt's statue for that of George III. . . . on the Bowling Green in 1770. . . . Does Mr. Tuckerman really suppose that a statue of George III. stood in the Bowling Green in 1770, and that in that year it was removed and one of Pitt "substituted" for it? This is the only possible inference from his words. Can he be ignorant of the fact that both of these statues were erected in 1770—that of Pitt at the intersection of Wall and William Streets, the other on the spot now covered by the Bowling Green fountain.

Mr. Tuckerman is wrong, too, in saying that the tombstone of William Bradford, the printer, was renewed by the Historical Society. The whole merit of this act of tardy justice to our first printer is due to the corporation of Trinity Church, with whom the idea of renewing Bradford's tombstone originated, and by whom all the expenses attendant thereon were defrayed.

I make these remarks from no ill-will toward Mr. Tuckerman, whom I respect and admire as a scholar and a gentleman. I would have them understood simply as a protest against the carelessness and ignorance with which our local annals have been treated by both Knickerbocker and barbarian. So long as these errors were confined to the pages of our petty scribblers, one could smother his indignation; but when we find them copied and perpetuated by our best writers, it is time, methinks, to cry out

S. W. P.

TWENTY-THIRD STREET, New York.

MR. SLOSSON'S *DIES IRÆ*.—II.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: The misfortune of not seeing my letter, which appeared in *THE ROUND TABLE* of the 5th inst., in print before its publication, must be my excuse for requesting you to correct its errors.

It was by no means my intention to say that Mr. Slosson had committed the blunder of *translating* the conjunction *et* by the adjective "fair." That this would be an absurdity—nay, an impossibility—seemed so patent, that it led to the carelessness of expression which I find has been understood literally by some of your readers, and indeed by one whom I regard as the most accomplished critic of mediæval poetry in this country. The idea that I intended to convey is this:

In the construction of the line, "Death shall die—fair nature too," the dash and the word "fair" take the place of *et* in the original, *Mors stupebit et natura*. In the original the conjunction closely unites the subjects; in the translation the adjective gives to one a quality not common to the other; and the dash, in effect, supplants the former by the latter. In a rhetorical sense, the reader ceases to contemplate death and exclusively contemplates nature; in a grammatical sense he construes the subjects disjunctively and not with a single verb. This will appear clearer if we take it up as a school exercise and change the tense. "Death and nature die" is the grammatical form of the original; "Death dies—fair nature too dies" is the grammatical form of the translation.

It is due to the translation to add that something has been said on the other side of this question, which I repeat:

"The *et* of the Latin is expressed in the word 'too.' There is no disjunction in the line as rendered by the translator, but a pause calling attention to the fact that death not only but all created things should come to an end when the judgment should take place. The epithet 'fair,' as applied to nature, is employed both as an ordinary thought and as tending to heighten the sense of loss. Without the use of the word 'too' it would be hardly possible to express in rhyme the grand thought of the two other lines of the stanza, viz., the creature rising from the grave and passing in review before his God."

I am, sir, etc.,

THE EDITOR OF THE SEVEN GREAT HYMNS.

WASHINGTON, January 9, 1867.

REVIEWS.

All books designed for review in *THE ROUND TABLE* must be sent to the office.

STAHR'S LIFE OF LESSING.*

GERMAN enthusiasm about Lessing has been almost incomprehensible in this country. The few who have read that small portion of his works which at this day ever is read find in them no superiority to the writings of Goethe and Schiller and other of his successors sufficient to explain the exceptional reverence in which he is held; and it is not generally understood that the honor rendered him is as the founder of German literature. For nearly a century and a half before his day the very language of Germany had fallen into an utter contempt shared little less by educated Germans themselves, who wrote in Latin or French, than by the neighbors who regarded them as intellectually scarce better than barbarians. In the literature of the *renaissance* French predominance established itself in Italy, Spain, and England, and from the close of the Thirty Years' War was so complete in Germany as even to exclude the national language from Frederick the Great's court and the universities and leave it so exclusively to the vulgar that Voltaire could write from Potsdam, "They speak only our tongue. German is for soldiers and horses." To stem this tide of French literature and pseudo

* *The Life and Works of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing*. From the German of Adolf Stahr. By E. P. Evans, Ph.D., Professor of Modern Languages and Literature in the University of Michigan. 2 vols. Boston; W. V. Spencer. 1866.

classics, to silence the native pedants whose critical supremacy was unquestioned, and to raise German letters from the contempt in which he found them, became the task of Lessing. For thirty years he busied himself—as the pioneer in any literary reform must—in casting pearls before swine. His reward was an embittered life of penury, persecution, and wasted powers, followed by posthumous honor.

Gottfried Ephraim Lessing, born in 1729, was the eldest son of the pastor of a Lusatian town, a man of great erudition, especially in theology and in classical, Oriental, French, and English languages, but with the uncompromising views of Lutheran orthodoxy. Lessing's mother was the daughter of the incumbent to whom her husband had succeeded—a woman of limited intelligence, who had in perfection the contracted opinions of the class among which her life had been passed; whose highest ambition for her sons was of pastoral distinction; and to whose narrow mind her son's career never became comprehensible, and was a life-long cause of disappointment. The constant meddling of these well-meaning parents; their perpetual counsels and lamentations respecting things beyond their comprehension; their impotency for pecuniary aid for themselves and their children at times when he was himself overwhelmed with want, especially the greedy pursuit of his sister—in a word, the general troublesomeness of his whole family, was among the severest of the many trials which conspired to make Lessing's life a burden. Intended by his parents for the church, the boy was sent, at the age of thirteen, to a famous grammar school which excluded all German branches from its course of study, and where he made employment for himself by translating *Euclid*, commencing a history of mathematics among the ancients, pursuing the study of polite letters by reading such classic and German poets as he could get access to, and writing, meanwhile, his first comedy, *The Young Scholar*. More than a year before his regulated course had expired, his teacher wrote to his father that the school had little more to teach him, and in 1746, at the age of seventeen, he entered the University of Leipzig, assisted by a stipend from the municipality of Kamenitz, his father's town, and by a relative who had sent him to school. At the university he was under the instruction of Ernesti and Christ, two professors of more liberal views and broader culture than were then commonly found in such positions. The literary atmosphere of Leipzig also gave a new impetus to the young student, while in its stage he found the determining influence of his life. When he had devoted his last penny to visits to the theatre, he translated French plays by way of gaining a free entrance. He likewise made the acquaintance of Madame Neuber, the leading spirit of the drama in Leipzig, and, after remodelling his comedy, *The Young Scholar*, laid it before her for her judgment, to which it commended itself so strongly that she had it represented, when it met with such applause that for a time Lessing thought of becoming an actor. Meanwhile the news had reached his parents that their son indulged in habitual intercourse with actors, a class of whom they seem to have formed their impressions from the strolling bands of players which visited their village, while the theatre *per se* was an abomination in their sight. Indeed, young Lessing's first tutor had been deposed from his church and driven from the town for having argued that the stage is a school for eloquence; and his friend Mylius, now an intimate friend of Lessing's, who congratulated him in a poem upon his removal from that "borough of insipidity and barbarism," was imprisoned by the magistracy, in which the family of Lessing was influential. Greatly scandalized, the father wrote a severe letter to the wayward youth, and, in order to rescue him from the brink of temporal and eternal ruin on which he stood, essayed a pious fraud, wrote to him that his mother—who was not sick—was dying, and thus got him home. Here Lessing remained several months, and on his return to Leipzig entered himself as a student of medicine. His stay was not long. The theatrical company failed, and he had become security for some of its members. Pressed by his creditors, he fled to Wittenberg, where he renewed his studies until his debts found him out and drove him to Berlin, whither he went with the intention of abandoning universities, where his studies had long been independent of the course, and of applying his allowance to the extinction of his obligations while supporting himself by literary labor, for which he was already fitted by habits of composition and by a store of learning rarely found in a youth of nineteen. From this time may be dated Lessing's wandering, roving, almost vagabond life, a restlessness which drove him from city to city, until he settled down in his "accursed castle," as he termed the dreary solitude of Wolfenbützel in which he languished and died. His va-

grancy, it is true, was not wholly a matter of choice. It was his necessity, against which he sorely rebelled, to do work which he found mere drudgery as the only means of procuring a livelihood and of satisfying the heavy demands of his family upon his slender purse. And it is largely to this necessity that we must ascribe the seeming fickleness which was constantly projecting great literary works which he sometimes only rudely blocked out, sometimes partially finished and abandoned, and frequently laid them aside for years to eventually remodel and complete.

During the time of this first residence at Berlin—for four times in his life he established himself here—he made the real commencement of his literary career, translating from French, Spanish, and Italian; commencing an essay *On the Pantomimes of the Ancients*; and founding a dramatic quarterly review, at first in conjunction with Mylius, until a quarrel took place between them. The first works which drew attention to him were his criticisms as *feuilletonist* of *The Berlin Journal*, in which capacity he took active part against both the factions which, led respectively by Gottsched and Klopstock, divided the literary world of Germany and Switzerland, and who were aghast at the audacity of the stripling who dared to question the dicta of the critical autocrat of Leipzig, and even to write, when reviewing his latest volume, "These poems cost two thalers and four groschens. The two thalers pay for the ridiculous, and the four groschens pretty much for the useful." In this controversy he first raised his voice against the neglect of German literature, a neglect which forced the German Klopstock to subsist upon a Danish pension, while Voltaire was living upon Prussia; French frivolity and wantonness tainted all German criticism, and "all manner of rubbish" from the English was being thrust upon the land on the strength of Richardson's and Fielding's novels. During this stay occurred the publication of several dramas—among which was *Miss Sara Sampson*, one of the most successful plays of the day—which were acted with applause, but disappeared from the stage before his death, and also of his first volume of lyrical poems. At this time, too, was his quarrel with Voltaire, for whom he was acting as translator, for a very interesting detailed account of which we must refer the reader to our author (Vol. I., book II., chap. IV.).

Our space will not permit us to follow Lessing's subsequent wanderings in detail. Spending a year in studies at Wittenberg, where his younger brother had just entered the university, he continued his criticisms by urging tolerance and humanity in judgment of the men who figured in the Reformation, and from his poetical readings—chiefly of the Roman poets, among whom Martial was one of his favorites—grew the greater part of his celebrated epigrams. Here, too, before his graduation in 1752, occurred his critical warfare with Lange, in whose person he worsted the whole Halle school of poets. Again he returned to Berlin, where he established his literary position, formed associations, many of them lifelong, with literary, scientific, and artistic friends, and passed perhaps the only successful and cheerful period of his life. Then came a residence at Leipzig and another at Berlin, marked by new labors for life and by the famous *Letters of Literature*, in which "German criticism first attained to the manly earnestness which penetrates to the kernel and essence of literary phenomena, and forms its decisions not from isolated features, but from the totality of a creation." The purpose of these letters was the creation of a real German literature modelled rather after Shakespeare than Corneille, and the demolition of the self-complacent coterie of schoolists and pedants who represented it in its degenerate state; they were not confined to books or authors, but were "excursions in every direction through the literary realm," assailing false principles and modes of thought, the voluminousness and platitudes and other besetting literary vices of the day, with such force as to make them masterpieces of Lessing's polemic style. During this period appeared also his *Fables*, the tragedy of *Philotas*, and an elaboration of the Faust legend, to which he continued, more or less, to devote himself during his whole after life, but of which the manuscript has been lost. Two years and a half were thus passed, and succeeding them were six years spent as secretary of the Governor of Silesia, during which his salary enabled him to collect a valuable library, although he was remorselessly pillaged by his parents, who, while treating him as a prodigal, did not scruple to ask him to pay the college debts of one brother and assume the care of two, one of whom was actually foisted upon him. During this period of freedom from bread-getting toil were created, among others, two of his greatest works, *Minna von Barnhelm* and the *Laocöon*, and at the same time he mastered the principles of Spinoza and other systems of philosophy, and thoroughly studied the works of the Christian Fathers.

Here, too, he formed the habit of high play at faro, and during the rest of his life he remained addicted to lotteries and gambling of various kinds. In 1765 he resigned this position—a step which his family met with loud reproaches, since with it would end their unfailing source of supply, and one which, apparently, only an inherent love of vagabondism can explain; for, thanks to the home extortions, he found himself, as of old, in absolute penury.

Again he went to Berlin, summoned thither by his friends, who hoped to procure for him the librarianship of the Royal Library, then vacated by the death of the Frenchman who had held it, and a position for which no man in Germany, and of all in Europe only Winckelmann, could compare in fitness with Lessing. Frederick the Great preferred Winckelmann, but with his usual meanness haggled about the salary until the scholar withdrew in disgust. Lessing was again urged upon the King who, disregarding German and ignorant of it, had always refused to render him any attention, and now rudely refused him, adding to Guichard, who plead his merits, that he "would write himself to Paris, and find a learned librarian without any help from him and his Germans." And Lessing, justly indignant, shook from his feet the dust of Berlin and Prussia and left them for the last time, betaking himself to Hamburg, where his services were desired to aid in the establishment of a great national theatre which Loeven was enthusiastically laboring to found. More disappointment came: the theatre failed; the *Dramaturgy*, which Lessing was issuing in sheets, had to be abandoned half finished because it was pirated and sold at a low price as soon as issued; and Lessing, the mark of a swarm of critics headed by Klotz, poorer by the amount of his library, which he had had to sell to defray his expenses, forty years old, and with his spirit as nearly broken as it could be, was again without occupation. He was now about to pursue a long-cherished scheme and make the journey into Italy which had, through life, been one of his aspirations, when this plan was suddenly interrupted. Among his intimate friends at Hamburg were Herr König and his wife, Eva König, toward whom Lessing felt an attachment which had rendered his longer stay intolerable, when König died, giving Lessing the hope that he might yet marry the woman he loved and to whom in due time he became betrothed. At this juncture, in 1769, came an invitation from the Duke of Brunswick, who was desirous of collecting in his state as many eminent men as he could—German-like—get cheap, desiring Lessing to become his librarian at Wolfenbützel, at a salary of 600 thalers (\$432) *per annum*. And in Wolfenbützel—a "little, desolate city (once a ducal residence), placed in a low, swampy, unhealthy region, possessing the narrow traits and pitiful provinciality of such dwarf cities in Germany"—Lessing settled himself, hoping soon to receive a promised increase of his pitiful salary, which was still further narrowed by the continued demands of his family and by the necessity, upon his father's death in 1770, of assuming the family debts. In this place he lost his health, which had hitherto been robust, and with it he lost his spirits, and almost lost hope. One delay after another prevented, first, the promised increase of his salary to 800 thalers (\$576), and then his marriage, which was contingent upon it. Finally, in 1776, he was married; but, little more than a year afterwards, he lost, at one blow, his first child and his wife, and he was remanded to greater solitude and suffering than his joyless life had yet known. He lived three years longer, during which he was involved in a controversy which grew out of his publication of *The Wolfenbützel Fragments*, portions of a work entitled *An Apology for the Rational Worshipers of God*, that had been left for posthumous publication by his friend Reimarus, a profound classical, philological, and philosophical scholar—"not a naturalist in the sense of Voltaire, but an honest deist, a warm reverer of natural religion." Lessing extended to his views a qualified support, and the storm which ensued broke furiously upon him just as his wife was dying, and when he was bowed with grief. He roused himself to meet it, and in one of the most brilliant contests of polemical theology that ever agitated the world Lessing rejoined to his assailants, headed by Götz, with an extent of learning, a caustic wit, a pitiless irony and relentless logic that nothing could stand before, and his worsted antagonists were forced to have recourse to the civil authorities to suppress the controversy and end the discussion. Lessing continued it in a measure in his last and most complete play, *Nathan the Wise*, commenced in his youth, and now so remodelled as to convey to the angry theologians a lesson of the largest tolerance and most Christian charity. The work which followed *Nathan* was his last, *The Education of the Human Race*, which

was, in fact, a continuation of the Götze controversy. Soon after this his health, long feeble, gave way; painful bodily infirmities accumulated upon him, until a stroke of paralysis, followed by twelve days of sickness, on Feb. 15, 1781, ended the life of a great and noble man whose prime misfortune was that he was born a century too soon, so that his life was that of a needy intellectual giant among pigmies and misers. What good this many-sided genius might have done if more happily circumstanced is incalculable. As it was, he taught his countrymen what a national literature was; he shattered the false standards of critical taste in art, poetry, and the drama, and threw down the barriers which circumscribed religious and philosophical speculation; he pointed out to Goethe and levelled for him the path in which he walked, and he left to Germany the first great name that illumined her letters.

Professor Evans has made an excellent translation of a work which he had much better taken as the basis of a book of his own, for nothing could be much worse as a biography than this. Of all enthusiasts a German enthusiast is the most intolerable; and Herr—or Dr., or Professor, or whatever he may be—Stahr has by their study for twenty years so saturated himself with Lessing's writings and the controversies they engendered that his knowledge has become unendurable in its profundity. The book should be styled *The Works of Lessing*, as to which it is exhaustive; but as to the man himself it throws not the least light upon his character, giving not even an anecdote or an intimation of his personal habits, or those of his friends. As a narrative we have never met with anything so utterly chaotic and incoherent, so destitute of chronological or othersystematic sequence, or so bristling with retrospects, digressions, excursions, or whatever else may be called violent transitions into the most unlooked-for times, places, and events. The only gleam of amusement that by any chance enlivens the page is an occasional outburst of lumbering Germanic wrath, which breaks from the author when he can no longer control his pent-up resentment toward the unappreciative barbarians who failed to comprehend his idolized Lessing.

PRIMARY PHONICS.*

THERE is always danger that a new idea in intellectual processes may be carried by enthusiasts not perhaps beyond its legitimate, but rather its practical scope, and its use be embarrassed by unnecessary entanglements. Then it devolves upon men of a practical mind to take the backward track, and restrain the workings of the new idea within limits that can be met by the natural conservatism of public opinion. Their task is, perhaps, a harder one than their forerunners', for these last have started prejudices by their excess which are more irradicable than mere conservatism.

The phonic idea was not indeed a new one, when some twenty years ago, under the direction of Messrs. Pitman and Ellis in England, it seemed for a while to have some slight chance of being pushed into popular favor, and had some confident adherents here in America. In 1846 a class of four negro adults, taken when wholly illiterate, were taught in seventy-two hours of instruction, extending over an interval of six weeks, to read so well that a public exhibition was given in Boston, and a committee, consisting of Dr. Kirk, Charles Sumner, and some others, testified to this result of a phonic system. All over England meetings were held in advocacy of the new system; types of the new pattern were cast; books, magazines, and newspapers were printed; and for a while the scheme went on swimmingly. When Dean Alford published the first edition of his *Queen's English* and called the innovation of removing the *u* from such words as *favour* only a move in accordance with the scheme of these advocates of phonic spelling, whose organ, the *Phonetic News*, looking in the characters, as the dean affirmed, like *Frankie Nuts*, had passed into the knacker's yard of used-up hobbies, he was taken to task for so curt dismissal of the subject and informed that the *Phonetic Journal* is still published, with a circulation of 1,000 copies, which statement he is fair enough to copy in his second edition. This shows that there is a lingering vitality in the scheme, although its chief advocate, Mr. Ellis, is now known to have given up the prosecution of it as a means to supplant the ordinary orthography; but still holds (if

we are not mistaken in supposing he wrote the article on *Phonetic Writing* in Chambers's *Encyclopædia*, now publishing) to its usefulness in primary instruction.

In the old system it was claimed that the eye usurped all the rights of regency over the orthography; and the new scheme took its adherents to the opposite extreme of granting the ear the sole empire. It remained to be seen whether there could not be established a dual potency, which should be more successful in satisfying the contradictory claims and preserving the peace than Mr. Calhoun's national proposition for a dual presidency. The three works which we name in our note have been attempted to this end, and as showing a decided drift in contemporary notions of elementary education, we purpose to examine their claims, and to see if they can offer a fair chance for the co-operation of both eye and ear in this matter. It cannot be suspected of the authors of the first-named primer that their well-known fealty to the best dictionaries of our tongues could be at once given up, or that they would be guilty of any iconoclastic notions to endanger the memorials of our language, as was charged upon the prime movers of the old phonic theory. They would supersede the accumulated wisdom of the English dictionary; these would only bring the others' system back to an accordance with that wisdom.

The reader may remember Dr. Herman in Bulwer's *Caxtons*, who founded the "Philhellenic Institute" and made such a great noise with his treatise denouncing the infamous fiction of spelling-books. "What brazen forehead you must have," writes that pedant, "when you say to an infant, CAT—spell *cat*; that is, three sounds forming a totally opposite compound compose a poor little monosyllable which, if you would but say the simple truth, the child will learn to spell merely by looking at it. How can three sounds which run thus to the ear, *see—ch—tee*, compose the sound *CAT*? Don't they rather compose the sound *see—ch—tee*, or *ceaty*? How can a system of education flourish that begins by so monstrous a falsehood, which the sense of hearing suffices to contradict?" The adherents of the phonic scheme run into just this same extravagance of Bulwer's pedant, with a mixture of indignation and surprise that our language had produced any literature at all. It was not bound to, and should not have done it. Napoleon was not bound to win battles if he did not follow established rules, and he was a fool to do it—so other pedants were decided. Meanwhile the conservators were willing to make the most of the literature our irregular orthography had produced; and thought the character of that literature quite sufficient ground to let well-enough alone; and that the tribulation the young idea underwent to learn how to shoot, was something like teething to the infant, a pretty fair test it was good for something, if it went through with it alive.

There was a philosophical view of the case left for a few to take, who made no hesitancy in rejecting the new alphabet. If their own views as to the desirableness of a phonic interpretation of orthography needed confirmation, they found it in the experience of all ages; in the modern adaptation of some of the continental tongues to phonic principles; in the invention of the Russian and Choctaw alphabets, as expressing comparatively recent philosophical views on the subject; and in the individual expression of many minds who in times past had come to the conclusion that it is the power of the letters, and not their names, that makes the spelling of a word, and that it is much better to teach the letters under the designation of their sounds than to give them distinctive appellations having little or no relation to their "powers." Here is the idea that, going as far back as the time of Queen Elizabeth and coming down, so many have worked upon; and we may adduce the names of Cheke, Sir Thomas Smith, Bullock, Mulcaster, the old "dominie" that taught Lords Stowell and Eldon, Howell, John Jones, our own Franklin, and more recently the elaborate schemes of Pitman, Ellis, and the inventor of the "Anti-absurd Alphabet," the projects of Clark, Rich, Kneeland, Comstock, and others, or those of Elphinstone, Gill, Butler, Bishop Wilkins, or even the orthographic vagaries of Milton, Ritson, Archdeacon Hare, Cowper, Taylor of Norwich, Landor, and the rest.

Of course, if calling a letter by its "power," and not by its name, were sufficient, there were no need of a new alphabet, as many of these advocate; but if we have ninety-four different sounds in the language, and only twenty-six letters in the alphabet (and three of these duplicated sounds), we must make one letter stand for several sounds, and the question then arose, How are we to tell which sound is intended by a given letter? The extremists have replied by making supplemental symbols for the extra sounds; but the conservatives have said, You must not disturb the established orthography, or the public mind will never sanction your method. The fail-

ure of Ellis and Pitman's alphabet has shown the conservatives reckoned justly upon the insurmountable prejudices against so radical an innovation.

A compromise plan has been started by some, which has been called the "word method," by which the word itself is associated with a distinct sound, somewhat after the Chinese method, or a modification of this, which may be called the "syllabic method," which Dr. Dunglison, of Philadelphia, we believe, has advocated to his classes. It seems a valid objection to this plan that it burdens the memory quite as tiresomely as the usual method of our ordinary spelling-books, though it is possible some infant minds may take to it more kindly of the two, as some teachers have alleged.

The more successful plan is likely to be, however, the bolder one of taking the letters as symbols of sound, and still by some device to twist the ordinary spelling into a shape to the eye which shall yet indicate the pronunciation.

While Mr. Wheeler was engaged in his lexicographical studies, having occasion to use an elocutionary work of Mr. Alexander Melville Bell, published in London, he saw advertised on its cover another manual of the same author, called *Letters and Sounds: An Introduction to English Reading on an entirely New Plan*. Being curious, he sent for the book, and on its arrival tried it at once in his own family and, it seemed to him, with marvellous success. The plan of the book was, by a few simple expedients and some combinations of letters which did not materially alter the appearance of the text and preserved the orthography (he printed the silent letters in a word a little above the line), to indicate to the eye the "power" of the letters to the ear, and thus to enable the child to read his text with considerable facility of acquisition, and then, by gradually dropping the helps, to get back imperceptibly to the ordinary page.

Subsequently, the same principle was developed with somewhat different detail by Rev. John C. Zachos, professor in the theological school at Meadville, Pennsylvania. He contended that the usual text could be made to furnish the key to a large majority of words, and if some twenty-five or thirty irregular monosyllables (which might be learned apart of themselves) were excepted, the key he proposed would apply to all but two per cent. of any ordinary English matter; and that this fraction could, of course, be learned as a feat of memory at any advanced stage of the pupil. In his primer he only marked diacritically the two different sounds of *th* and the two different sounds of *s* (giving a heavier face to the type for one sound of each) and put a short sign over the *oo* in book, etc., and printed the silent letters in *italics*—all of these expedients being gradually dropped as the learner progressed, as well as the *hair-spaces* by which he separated syllables. In addition to these, he had to show where for guidance the 43 elementary sounds and about 70 signs, which represent them by some reduplication, could be found. This he did by classifying letters and digraphs (two letters) under these 43 elementary sounds; thus *a, ai, ay, ei, ey*—*a* (sounded as it is named); *a* closing a syllable, or with an *e* mute in the same syllable—*a* (sounded as it is named); *a* followed by consonant and without *e* mute—*a* as in *pat*, and so on with rules of this character to the number of 43, which the pupil must of course learn gradually, until he secures by such *memoriter* exercise rules for pronouncing such an English text as is likely to be met with, with such exceptions as we have above indicated, which are to be again subjects for a further exercise of the memory. It may seem at the first glance that little is gained from the mere drudgery of the memory, as now ordinarily exercised. A close examination, we think, will show that something is gained, and that, moreover, there is a more philosophical development of the faculty than under the usual system.

When this book of Mr. Zachos was brought to the attention of Mr. Wheeler by Mr. Soule, it was thought that, while the principle was right, the detail might be improved, and, with Mr. Zachos's concurrence, the first primer named in our note was prepared, the previous studies of both of these gentlemen satisfying them that there is more regularity in the use of certain letters, or combination of letters for certain sounds, than is generally supposed, and a sufficient degree of regularity to warrant some such use being made of it; a principle that they had been encouraged in by President Hill, of Harvard, who had given a practical test to Mr. Zachos's system and awarded it his enthusiastic adherence. Messrs. Soule and Wheeler have somewhat simplified the graduated advancement of the lessons, taking pains not to confuse the pupil by any mention of the *names* of the letters or combinations till considerable progress is made; and somewhat varying for clearness' sake the character of the few arbitrary signs used, and substituting the hyphen for the "thin space" in separating syllables, as more distinct.

* *First Lessons in Reading: a new method of teaching the reading of English, by which the ear is trained to discriminate the elementary sounds of words, and the eye to recognize the signs used for these sounds in the established orthography.* By Richard Soule, associate editor of Worcester's Dictionary, and W. A. Wheeler, associate editor of Webster's Dictionary. Boston: Lee & Shepard, 1866.

The *Phonic Primer and Primary Reader*. By J. C. Zachos. Published by a committee, under the auspices of the American Phonic Association for the advancement of reading among the unlettered classes. Boston, 1865.

Hillard's Primer. Edited in pronouncing orthography by Edwin Leigh. Boston: Brewer & Tileston, 1866.

This "Zachosystem," thus brought to solve the question of the adaptation of common orthography to be the means of a phonic method of teaching, naturally comes into comparison with another system, that of Dr. Leigh's, which is brought forward contemporaneously with it, which has the opportune advantage of being engrafted on a standard primer. His system is to print silent letters in a type of hair line; and to take the common form of the various letters, and modify it for each particular sound of the letter, so that it shall bear a general resemblance to the original and yet be distinctive. Thus five modifications of the symbol *a* represent the five different sounds of that letter, which, as in Mr. Zachos's system, is always known by its "power" at the start, and not by its name. Letters in pairs having a joint sound are linked in the type by a ligature. The method of gradation in progress does not differ greatly from the Zachos plan.

The objections to this scheme, which seem to render it less desirable than Messrs. Soule and Wheeler's, are that the alterations of typography render it open to general prejudice, which is too strong to be neglected by the practical educator, and that when the learner, in dropping these typical helps as he advances, comes to the received text of the written language, he has not laid by a store of the principles of its pronunciation, as in the Zachos plan, to be of ever ready use to him in further progress. In keeping the general form of the letter (though that may be of use in dropping away easily to the ordinary type) the variations were necessarily slight, and must be more burdensome to the child's memory than the less empirical method of teaching by the contextual letters, as in the rival system; and while this latter scheme is made to embrace a large proportion of the vocabulary of the language, Dr. Leigh's instruction is limited to the actual words he has introduced in his primer, which is but a few hundred.

In view of political changes looking to the necessity of a more general elementary instruction among the now unlettered classes, as well as the desirableness of improving in our established system for the more favored classes—and the most conservative may hesitate to say improvement were impossible—this new direction of attention among the educators of the country, deserves serious consideration.

LIBRARY TABLE.

Craddock Novell. By Richard Doddridge Blackmore. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1866.—The author of the above novel seems to have set about his work with an oppressive (but utterly mistaken) sense of the duty of a novelist, and has labored most assiduously to impart to his readers a vast amount of acquired knowledge, together with some original and peculiar specimens of philosophy, couched in phraseology admirably adapted to justify Talleyrand's saying that "language was invented for the concealment of thought." The story of Craddock Novell, not very new but nevertheless interesting, is awkwardly told and sadly involved; improbable situations are invented and family affairs unnecessarily complicated, but the character of the hero is well drawn, and the worthy parson John Rosedew and the eccentric Doctor Hutton might leave a much worse book. Craddock and his twin brother are the sons of Sir Craddock Novell, the hero of the story being supposed, through a blunder of his Irish nurse, to be the first born, and of course heir to the title and estates. On the eve of his majority the mistake is discovered—by certain marks upon his neck—by Dr. Hutton, who makes known the fact, greatly to the delight of Sir Craddock, with whom the younger son has always been a favorite. The good people at Nowelhurst Hall have scarcely had time to recover from the astonishment caused by Dr. Hutton's revelation when the new aspirant to the estate is found murdered in the forest. His brother is suspected of the crime, as he is found near the body with his gun newly discharged in his hand. The coroner's jury acquit him of any intention to commit the deed, and the real murderer subsequently confesses his crime. The young lady who, for want of a better, we must call the heroine, does not play a very important part in this curious drama. Amy Rosedew, the daughter of the honest parson, "who always thought in Greek except when Latin hindered him," is exceedingly beautiful, also quite conscious of her own attractions, and, while the author claims for her great simplicity and innocence, he makes her transfer her affections from one brother to the other with a marvellous degree of facility. The most extraordinary character in the book, and the one which the author evidently most delights to dwell upon, is Mr. Bull Garnet. "He was," says Mr. Blackmore, "a Christian of the most advanced intelligence," and yet he was possessed of a "furious, reckless, damnable, and thoroughly fiendish temper;" then "his great eyes would gather volume and spring like a mastiff from his kennel; his mighty forehead would scarp and chine like the headland when the plough turns; and all his aspect grow four-square with more than hydraulic pressure." Rather singular characteristics for a man who "adapted himself to the broadest Christianity." A storm, in which an Indian is wrecked, gives opportunity to Bull and his son for the exercise of their courage and intrepidity, and after a long contest with the waves three senseless bodies are washed ashore, Garnet's, his son Bob's, and a strange young woman, the latter proving to be the

daughter of Sir Craddock's brother by an Afghan woman. In infancy Eva had been taken captive with her Afghan nurse by some of the hill tribes, and her education while among them was somewhat startling: "She so distinguished herself by precocious skill in thieving that her delighted owner conferred upon her the title of 'Never-spot-the-dust,' and even instructed her how to steal the high priest's knife of sacrifice." When restored to her father—

"She could run up the punkah, and stand on the top, and twirl around on one foot; she could cross the compound in three bounds; she could jump upon her father's shoulder and stay there with the spring of her sole; she could glide along the floor like a serpent, and hold on with one hand to anything. And then her wonderful lightness of touch; she had fully earned her name, she could brush the dust without marking it."

This astonishing young woman, when recovering from the effects of the bruises and other temporary inconveniences consequent upon narrowly escaping drowning, ran to the sofa upon which Garnet's son Bob was lying, and

"kissed till he was out of breath, and his face wet with the dew of her tears."
"On please don't," said Bob; "I am sure I don't deserve it."
"Yes you do, and I will marry you when I am old enough."

A promise which she subsequently performs. In describing a game of chess Mr. Blackmore finds the English language insufficient, and candidly confesses: "I am sorry and ashamed, but I can't express these things in English, for the language is rich in emotion but a pauper in philosophy." The pedantry and ostentatious display of learning with which the volume abounds might fairly be characterized by the irreverent as "snobbish," while the ponderous and abortive attempts at humor are even more tiresome than the Greek and Latin quotations. If Mr. Blackmore desires to become popular as a novelist, he will reserve his scholastic lore for works of a graver character than the one now before us.

The Dead Letter: An American Romance. By Seely Register. New York: Beadle & Co.—Tales whose interest turns upon the detection of hidden crime are always profoundly interesting to the majority of readers. The instinct for the chase—one of those inherent passions which mankind in all ages and all climates have exhibited—finds in the present civilization the pursuit of a criminal a substitute for that healthier pursuit of beast and bird which gave a zest to the ruder lives of our predecessors. *The Dead Letter* possesses this kind of interest, and is written with a vigor which sustains the reader's attention to the last, and almost atones for serious defects of style. Bad writing seems too often the accompaniment of anything like originality and vigor in the construction and management of plot, and the converse is as frequently observable in more polished novelists than the author of *The Dead Letter*. Mr. Register does not waste time on introductory description. In the second chapter the lover of the heroine is stabbed as he walks from the railway cars to her house, and from that to the close the reader is kept in a pretty well sustained state of uncertainty as to the criminal. Two very well sketched characters—they are but sketches—attract his suspicions: one a sewing girl, in love with the murdered man; the other a man, young, handsome, and saturnine, who was jealous of him. The law is personified, as usual, in a marvellous detective, who carries the reader from the banks of the Hudson to the far wilds of California, finds the proof he seeks, and returns to confront the guilty and the innocent, and restore peace to the innocent who have been tortured by suspicion.

The scene being laid in America gives additional interest to those trifling details which make a picture life-like, and familiar objects of the city, such as docks, wharves, and ferry-boats, are made pegs whereon to hang some vigorous bits of descriptive writing. If Mr. Register would bestow a little time and attention upon the study of English composition, he might, without injury to the freshness of his style, be enabled to write fairly grammatical English, which would be of advantage to himself, as it certainly would be more satisfactory than his present effort to his readers.

A Treatise on the Law of Partnership. By Theophilus Parsons, LL.D., Dane Professor of Law in Harvard University at Cambridge. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1867.—The admirable work which Professor Parsons has now presented to the profession and to his country will remain a permanent monument of his comprehensive abilities and luminous style. To praise Professor Parsons as a lawyer would be superfluous if not impertinent, but we may be permitted to express our gratitude for so important an accession to American legal resources and our admiration for the literary merits which set forth with so unusual an attractiveness the treatment of an essentially didactic subject. In addition to the exhaustive expounding of its main topic, this work includes the discussion of the principles of Bankruptcy, of Limited Partnerships, of Joint Stock Companies, and of the Part Ownership of Vessels; all of which being handled with reference to American practice and precedents are endowed with exceptional value. For purposes of reference, therefore, the volume is of the greatest practical importance, and, although it may be true that every man cannot well be his own lawyer, hardly a merchant or general business man in the country but will find it to his advantage to keep such a treatise ready at hand in his counting-room or office. For perspicuity and directness of style Professor Parsons is unsurpassed among American jurists, and the circumstance is felicitous in the case of a work like the present one, which will be in the hands of so many non-professional readers. All the latest cases are systematically arrayed and the arrangement of topics is such as to facilitate the understanding of every possible contingency. The notes are copious, embracing trans-Atlantic as well as cis-Atlantic citation, and the index is apparently as perfect as such a thing can well be made. We have altogether an unusual pleasure in congratulating both its

learned author and the public upon the appearance of this work. There are assuredly very few in the language which can compare with it in respect of its combination of rigorous accuracy in technical detail with happy adaptation as a popular manual.

American Leaves: Familiar Notes of Thought and Life. By Samuel Osgood. New York: Harper & Brothers 1867.—We have in this volume a pleasant collection of essays which originally appeared in *Harper's Magazine*. The author, in a brief and modest preface, takes occasion to remark: "It is to be hoped that the *Monthly* that is a classic in American families and libraries on account of its admirable compend of current history, may not lose its hold by the liberal wish of its proprietors to add thoughtful essays from various pens to its exciting store of sketches and stories, and its instructive papers upon popular subjects." This would seem to imply that the appetite for fiction was found to be so unappeasable and exclusive that it was thought hazardous to print, even in so popular a magazine as *Harper's*, anything in the shape of essays or non-fabulous sketches. It is to be feared that there is more truth in the estimate of public taste this observation would suggest than is altogether agreeable, and it is rather a shameful thing that it should be so. That our population should so universally prefer very bad fiction to very good writing of all other descriptions, is an unpromising commentary upon the state of education and average mental habits. *Harper's* undoubtedly prints some very good fiction; but the story weeklies of far inferior grade have enormous circulations, and they print fiction exclusively. It might be imagined that in a country of such diffused educational facilities, a larger proportion would imbibe a healthy literary taste than is found to be the fact. But each new venture in the shape of weekly or monthly seems to enforce the conclusion that projectors are more and more convinced that, to have a chance of success, they must give stories, and stories if possible more red-hot, intense, and scarifying than are given by their predecessors. The fifteen papers furnished by Mr. Osgood in his present compilation are thoughtful, carefully expressed, and evenly interesting. If one half the blood and thunder now so voraciously consumed by our working classes could be replaced by articles like these we should not find so many low-lived blackguards in official stations or so many knaves and felons voted into our legislative assemblies.

The Complete Phonographer: Being An Inductive Exposition of Phonography. By James E. Munson. New York: Robert H. Johnson & Co. 1867.—This latest work on phonography, is from the pen of an accomplished stenographer, and we may reasonably expect to find here the latest improvements of the art. Stenography is as yet a sealed book to many who could advantageously use it in their every-day life, and the sooner the science is improved to its utmost extent and the more numerous the intelligent writers who will give us plain, straightforward rules as to the best and easiest method of gaining this knowledge, the better for the world at large. If the man who causes one more blade of grass to grow than grew before is a benefactor of his race, what term is left for him who shall give to each constant writer say half an hour *per diem* by shortening the weary road his pen must travel? Stenography as now practised increases the speed of a writer five or six times—therefore, if the day shall come when all writing and printing, and therefore all reading, is done by use of stenography, we may practically live five or six times as long as we do at present. Mr. Munson has introduced in his volume several innovations on the old system which strike us as improvements. In seeking to restore uniformity and simplicity to the science rules have been made—not for the purpose of proving them by exceptions, but to be immutable as are the laws of the Medes and Persians. For example, we may name the rules at sections 140, 141, 201, and 212, to which he makes no exceptions, while in the hand-book to the first there are nine exceptions; to the second, ten; to the third, two; and to the fourth, nine. As an example of consolidation or generalization, the reader will find that section 281, paragraph 1, includes no less than 13 distinct rules of Mr. Graham's. Particularly worthy of commendation are the chapters on preparing copy for the printers, which should be read by every one who is ambitious of seeing his writings in print. To this subject is added an exhaustive section on proof-reading, and one on preparing law reports. At the end of the book we find exercises in reading and writing on the inductive principle. This volume is well printed and well bound, and reflects more credit on the publishers than can their largest importation of books from abroad.

Harper's Weekly. Vol. X. 1866.—If success be the test of merit, this popular weekly must be awarded one of the loftiest of niches in the temple of letters. But although even the ignorant will promptly challenge such a standard, it must in all fairness be acknowledged that *Harper's Weekly* has exhibited qualities which would deserve cordial praise whether they won for it commercial success or otherwise. Somewhat extreme in politics, its editorials have been almost invariably pointedly and strongly written, and therefore worthy the perusal of educated people. Its illustrations have been always striking and they have shown the gratifying feature of steady improvement. Its fiction and miscellaneous articles have been well selected and carefully edited, and we have yet to see a paper in *Harper's* which would prove objectionable in the family circle. For these reasons and for the satisfactory contrast it presents to the wretched chamber-maids' weeklies of the sensation style, we are glad to offer our word of appreciative commendation to this paper and to congratulate it upon a success of which the handsome volume before us is a substantial evidence.

The Criterion: A Means of Distinguishing Truth from Error in Questions of the Times. With Four Letters on the Eirenicon of Dr. Pusey. By A. Cleveland Coxe, Bishop

of Western New York. New York: H. B. Durand. 1866. —Bishop Coxe is indignant about Dr. Pusey's *Eirenicon*. He repudiates—justly, we think—all attempts to harmonize the Thirty-nine Articles with the decrees of Trent. The principles of interpretation advocated in *Tract Number Ninety* and in the *Eirenicon* he rejects as "immoral," and declares that he will set aside candidates for orders who avow such principles on the score not of heresy, but of immorality. This is plain talking, and not uncalled for. The bishop's "notes" of truth may appear to some persons rather complicated. They are these seven: 1. Ecumenical; 2. Primitive; 3. Vincentian; 4. Episcopal; 5. Liturgical; 6. Anglican; 7. Nicene. On the important question of the present Episcopal costume he remarks: "In the South, its intolerable weight and heat in summer must be an affliction; and in winter I have often desired the warmth of a cloth cope while ministering in cold churches, for the cope is the only ecclesiastical cloak I know of, and the fashion of St. Paul's is probably forgotten, even at Troas." Is it quite certain that St. Paul's cloak was an "ecclesiastical" one? And were his "parchments" really the primitive liturgy?

The Shadow of Christianity; or, the Genesis of the Christian State. A Treatise for the Times. By the author of The Apostasy. New York: Hurd & Houghton. —The thoughtful writer of this interesting essay believes "that the true state can exist only as an incident of Christianity; and only by a deeply pervading influence of its purifying, quickening, and controlling power." In the first chapter he dwells upon "the church, as the earthly substance of Christianity;" in the second he sketches the ideal of the commonwealth, which is "the shadow of Christianity;" the third and fourth chapters are upon the pagan state and the Christian state; the last investigates the genius and present position of the American Republic. Our republic the author believes to be far in advance of any other state in its main tendencies. A democracy with Christianity for its life is the ideal. In the conflict of the North with the South he sees the antagonism between the two theories, *capital shall own labor and let labor own capital*. "The triumph of this second principle will be, in relation to the state, the ultimate and crowning triumph of Christianity, and the complete realization of the true republic, the true commonwealth." This little volume will well repay a careful perusal. It is written by a well-known New England physician, who is also at home in the field of philosophical reflection.

The New Birth; or, The Work of the Holy Spirit. By Austin Phelps, Professor in Andover Theological Seminary. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. 1867.—The subjects of the five chapters of this carefully prepared treatise are: *Conversion—Its Nature; Regeneration the Work of God; Truth the Instrumentality of Regeneration; Responsibility as Related to Sovereignty in the New Birth; The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.* The first four chapters have already been published in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*. The style of discussion is lucid and forcible; the statements and definitions are explicit; abstract arguments are relieved and enlivened by a careful and polished rhetoric; and the whole work has a practical tendency as well as a definite theoretical basis, conformed to the principles and methods of what is popularly known as the New England theology.

Nicodemus with Jesus. By Rev. J. M. P. Otis. Philadelphia: J. S. Claxton. 1867.—This is also a treatise on regeneration, of a more popular cast. The doctrine of the writer is thus expressed: "Unless we are born of water in baptism, we cannot become members of the Church militant; and unless we are born of the Spirit in regeneration, we can never become members of the Church triumphant in heaven."

Records from the Life of S. V. S. Wilder. New York: American Tract Society.—The many friends of the late Mr. Wilder will welcome this simple record of his useful and honorable life, which was so largely devoted to the interests of religion. In prosperity and adversity he exemplified the power of the Christian faith. His record of his life is a useful book for young men just embarking upon a mercantile career.

Bible Emblems. By the late Rev. Edward E. Scelye, D.D., Schenectady, N. Y. New York: American Tract Society.—Some of the familiar emblems of the Scriptures are here explained and expounded in a clear, simple, and forcible style. Avoiding the allegorizing extreme of interpretation, the author brings out the full significance of such emblems as the Higher Rock, the Voice of Blood, Christians' God's Temples, the Rainbow, the Altar of Incense, and several others.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- LITTLE, BROWN & Co., Boston.—A Treatise on the Law of Partnership. By Theophilus Parsons, LL.D. 1867.
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & Co., Philadelphia.—Idalla: A Novel. By Ouida, author of Chandos, Strathmore, etc., etc. Pp. 594. 1867.
D. & J. SADLER & Co., New York.—Sermons for the Principal Seasons of the Sacred Year. By the Rev. Thomas S. Preston, Pastor of St. Ann's Church and Chancellor of the Diocese of New York. Pp. 581. 1867.
Life of Catherine McAuley, Foundress and First Superior of the Institute of Religious Sisters of Mercy. By a Member of the Order of Mercy. With an Introduction by the Venerable Richard Baptist O'Brien, Archdeacon of Limerick, etc. Pp. 500. 1866.
LEE & SHEPARD, Boston.—Amateur Dramas for Parlor Theatricals, etc. By George M. Baker. Pp. 252. 1867.
G. W. CARLETON & Co., New York.—Liffith Lank; or, Lunacy. By C. H. Webb. Illustrations by Sol Eytinge, Jr. Pp. 48. 1866.
J. P. SKELLY & Co., Philadelphia.—But Once. By the author of Let Well Alone. Pp. 255. 1867.
John Hatherton. By the author of Effie's Friends. Pp. 192. 1867.
Brook Silverstone: A Story for Children. By Emma Marshall. Pp. 171. 1866.

The Story of a Red Velvet Bible. By M. H. Pp. 103. 1866.
A Child's Warfare; or, The Conquest of Self. By Madeline E. Hewer. Pp. 313. 1867.
Let Well Alone. By the author of The Widow's Son, etc. Pp. 258. 1867.
E. H. BUTLER & Co., Philadelphia.—A Grammar of the Latin Language, for the Use of Schools. By Wm. Bingham, A.M. Pp. 388. 1867.
BRADBURY, EVANS & Co., London.—The Handy-Volume Shakespeare. Vol. II. Pp. 275. 1866. (For sale in New York by R. H. Johnson & Co.)
HARPER & BROS., New York.—Harper's Weekly: A Journal of Civilization. Vol. X. For the year 1866. Pp. 532.

PAMPHLETS, ETC.

HARPER & BROS., New York.—Rachel's Secret: A Novel. By the author of The Master of Marston. Pp. 150. 1867.
We have also received A Discourse, etc., by Henry Martyn Scudder, D.D., San Francisco.
Also, current issues of The Art Journal—London and New York; The Riverside Monthly, The American Journal of Numismatics, The Friend—New York.

LITERARIANA.

Few who are not directly interested are aware how grave a tax is inflicted upon all whose business lies in newspapers or books by the extravagant price of paper. More than double the prices which ruled before the war are now obtained for the various grades, and the fall of values in other articles has affected this one but in a slight degree. We are assured by dealers that this is chiefly due to the scarcity of rags; but rags are sufficiently abundant in Europe and are among the very few things which pay no duty. On the other hand, the duty on paper is a practically prohibitory one, and although a better quality can be bought in London for four-pence sterling the pound than here costs twenty cents, it appears that it cannot profitably be imported. Thus, while the national revenue is not in the least assisted, those who make and those who buy newspapers or books are subjected to a heavy burden which only enriches the manufacturers. A large number of new paper mills are immediately, as might be expected, to go into operation, which may bring down prices to some extent through competition, but this relief will be an inadequate one. Besides, it will give strength to the cry which will directly be raised, not to interfere with the tariff in this respect because of the injury to an extensive manufacturing interest. We earnestly hope that Congress may be induced to give this subject earnest and candid attention. American literature is now pressed down by a most unjust and impolitic burden which does not relieve the national exchequer and does improperly aggrandize a very few persons. Our book-trade has been affected to an almost fatal degree, and the number of English publications in the market is a tangible measure of it. We cannot afford, if we are to have any national literature at all, to crush out its vitality by such meaningless and onerous impositions. All other branches of industry are now looking forward to relief after the dark and troublous past, and most others may look forward with hope; but nearly all those connected with publishing are as badly off as in the worst days of the war. We protest against a discriminative injustice which reacts most disastrously upon education and general intelligence, and we earnestly entreat that Congress may be wise enough to speedily adopt a simple and obvious method of relief.

THERE is no little promise in these verses, the first poetical effort of a young lady of Syracuse:

THE DEAD YEAR.

I.
The parting day is done;
Another year has gone—
Gone for ever!
Gone from futurity,
Into obscurity,
Aye—for ever!

II.
Right and Wrong it has wrought,
Joy and Pain it has brought
Thee constantly;
Still bow with reverence,
Knowing kind Providence
Dealt with thee.

III.
If Fortune's winning smile
Charm our weak hearts awhile,
'T will pass away;
True happiness is found
Not in the wide world round,
Seek where we may.

IV.
Is the way oft dreary,
And are stout hearts weary
In the fierce strife?
Or has the icy breath
Of the huge monster, Death,
Taken a life?

V.
And, with an Angel bright,
Borne upward in its flight,
Reaching its goal—
Leaving a life lesson,
With its burning impression,
Deep on the soul?

VI.
What matter how passed it,
If fate has o'ercast it
With grief and gloom?
Memory will treasure
Not its woe nor pleasure
In the dark tomb.

S. V. A.

SYRACUSE, Jan. 1, 1867.

THE AGATHYNIAN is to be added to the list of New York book clubs. Its intention is to print, at as moderate cost as possible, and in limited editions—one hundred and twenty copies each, of which but one hundred will be for sale—both original works and reprints of rare, curious, and old American, English, French, and Latin books. These are to be issued from the Bradstreet press, and, in the case of old books, head and tail pieces, initial letters, and cuts, the reprints will be fac-similes. From

the circular—itself as exquisite a specimen of typography as we have ever seen—it appears that the first issue will be made next month, being a reprint of a satirical work of the last century entitled *Advice to the Officers of the British Army*, with notes and an introduction, and with a wood-cut in fac-simile of the original representing General Burgoyne, Sir Harry Clinton, and Lord Cornwallis. Subscribers will secure attention in the order of their applications, those who fail of securing a place among the first hundred being placed upon the list of the next issue. The membership of the club, we believe, is not known. It may be communicated with through Messrs. J. M. Bradstreet & Son, of New York, and John Pennington & Son, of Philadelphia.

MRS. MARY E. NEALY, of Washington, who for some fifteen years has been a frequent contributor to the better class of American periodicals and in some cases to the English magazines, has nearly ready for the press two volumes of her collected poems. From one of the volumes is this, we believe hitherto unpublished, poem:

TO A SEA-SHELL.

"And for their birthplace moan
As moans the ocean-shell."—MRS. HEMANS.
"Alas! Thou wilt still wail moan."—MRS. WELBY.
What art thou moaning for, ocean shell?
We are proud of thy beauty—we love thee well.
We gaze, and we gaze on thy delicate hue,
Like roses dipped in the morning dew;
And we wonder much at so fair a thing
Unmarked by change's shadowy wing.
So fadeless and fair, thou ocean shell,
O why is thy moan like a funeral knell?

From the Orient shores of the far Cathay
Wert thou borne from thy home and friends away?
And dost thou yearn for thy native shore
And the grand Pacific's mighty roar?
For thy beautiful caves and coral groves,
And thy clustered friends and ocean-loves?
And do we hear in thy constant moan
The spirit's anthem—"Alone, alone!"
Perhaps thou hast loved some mermaid fair,
With sky-blue eyes and sea-green hair;
Perhaps thou wert changed by some wizard spell
From an ocean god to a pearly shell.
O, had I the talisman, back again
Thou shouldst fly to thy home in the Eastern main;
Where thy heart should never again make moan
And thy life no longer should be alone!

But here, fair shell, in our favored land,
Where Freedom waveth her starry wand,
Even here full many a spirit-moan
Is heard, still wailing "Alone, alone!"
While the death-shots hurrying through the air
Send tidings of woe and dark despair.
And the brightest spirits on earth that dwell
Must bear their sorrows, thou ocean shell!
Then, beautiful mourner! come stay with me,
For I, sometimes, am alone like thee.
Come! and give me dreams of the ocean deeps
And every beautiful thing that sleeps
In its hidden caves: for I need relief
From the canker-worms of change and grief.
Then O, thou lovely and fadeless shell,
Stay, stay! I will cherish thee fond and well.]

Alas! thou wilt hush not thy weary moan,
But answerest ever, "Alone, alone!"
Like a human, there's a nought but the sympathy
Of a kindred nature will do for thee.
Wealth, beauty, and honor, O hungered soul!
Will not calm the billows that o'er thee roll.
Grief's wildest sorrow—Fate's keenest dart—
Can be soothed alone by a kindred heart.

MR. GEORGE VANDENHOFF—who, we understand, has prepared a pleasant anecdotal lecture about Molière, with readings of his own translation from the French poet's comedies—presents the implication in the letter we recently published from "The Editor of *The Seven Great Hymns*" that Latin may not receive as brief an English translation. In proof of the contrary, he sends for that stanza of the *Dies Ira* which our correspondent considers Mr. Slosson's weakest, and for which he has had recourse to Dr. Irons, a rendering which, line for line, is certainly complete, and, barring the false rhyme, is so much better than any we have seen as to suggest a composite or eclectic *Dies Ira* as the only way of getting a satisfactory translation. The original and Mr. Vandenhoff's rendering are as follows:

"Judex ergo cum sedebit,
Quicquid latet apparebit;
Nil inultum remanebit."

"When the Judge ascends his throne,
Every secret shall be known;
Guilt unpunished shall be none."

In continuation of the subject of succinct translations, Mr. Vandenhoff has these instances, which we quote:

"A lady one day triumphantly asked me how the phrase in the story of the *Rhinoceros* (Dante)—

"Acqual giorno non leggiamo d'avanti!"—

could be rendered with equal terseness in English. The answer was easy:

"That day we read no more!"

In which we have a literal translation more compact than the original, expressing the idea in six syllables instead of twelve.

"One of the most difficult passages from a Latin author that I know of is from *Cæsar's Commentaries*, proposed to me by an eminent lawyer and accomplished scholar of St. Louis. It is this: *Cæsar reproves a centurion of his army who ventures to advise him against giving battle, and the reprover carries with it a slur upon the bravery of the officer.* The centurion, stung with the insinuation, replies: '*Hodie, Cæsar, mihi aut vivo aut mortuo gratias ages.*'"

"It must be admitted that the compactness of the phraseology cannot be excelled. The Latin terminations, marking the inflections of the adjectives, give that language a great advantage. Still, I think our English comes very near it in terseness and point: '*This day, Cæsar, you should thank me, dead or alive.*'"

"I consider these and similar examples and exercises as advantageous in tending to the acquisition of a concentrated and forcible style—a thing in these wordy days *valde desiderandum.*"

MR. A. BOYD, of this city, is collecting—we presume with a view to publication—every available memento associated with President Lincoln. Of writings respecting him he has some thirty bound volumes and over one hundred unbound; besides large numbers of portraits, mourning cards, badges, medals, catalogues of medals, letters and autographs by Mr. Lincoln, prospectuses of books about him, posters for the arrest of the assassins—in fine, whatever publication or token, however trifling,

relates to the martyred President. In quest of these he has rummaged bookstores and news depots from garret to basement, and now solicits the assistance of others interested in the same subject. His address is, P. O. Box 6006, N. Y.

The following pretty bit of sentiment comes to us from "Down East":

A SONG.

Once it was only in dreams, my love,
That I by your side could stand;
Then every sail on the sea was aglow,
And roses covered the land—
And roses ribboned the land,
Where thou wert more than a queen in state,
With a lily-light diadem,
But here is a different dawn, my love,
I'm keeping thy heart-warm hand;
My ships may go down in the kindled sea,
Thy roses die out in the land—
Thy roses may fall in the land,
But more will be left to our life, believe,
Than will ever be lost with them.

HIRAM RICH.

MR. HENRY S. ALLEN, formerly the manager of Mr. William H. Appleton's establishment, has become associated with Mr. Carleton under the firm style of G. W. Carleton & Co. The union of the business tact and experience which each of the members possesses in perfection promises additional prosperity for what is already the most enterprising house engaged in publishing the more reputable class of sensational literature.

SENATOR CORNELL—whose name will henceforth be chiefly known in connection with the Cornell University—last month presented the town of Ithaca with an imposing building containing, in four thousand dollars' worth of books, the nucleus of a public library. Besides the building, whose cost was above \$30,000, and from portions of which, rented as a post-office, national bank, and other purposes, a considerable income will be derived. Mr. Cornell intends giving one thousand dollars' worth of books annually until he shall have given fifteen thousand dollars' worth.

MR. C. G. ROSENBERG, the artist, is collecting his poems for publication.

MR. E. G. SQUIER is to deliver in Boston a course of lectures upon *The Inca Empire and the Ancient Monuments of Peru*.

MR. FRANK MOORE is finishing his *Rebellion Record*, which is to be concluded within six months.

THE Rev. Dr. Robert Lowell, brother of Prof. J. R. Lowell, and author of *The New Priest*, has been elected to the professorship of English literature in Racine College, Wisconsin.

MR. BAYARD TAYLOR—to whom, we observe, the translation of Auerbach's last book has been entrusted by its author—goes in the spring to Germany for an absence of a year or two.

REV. AUGUSTUS WOODBURY, of Providence, has written a book on *Burnside and the Ninth Corps*.

GEN. JUBAL A. EARLY has privately printed at Toronto a volume chiefly remarkable for its egotism and unreconstructedness, partially entitled *A Memoir of the Last Year of the War for Independence in the Confederate States of America*—partially only, for the full title would fill seven or eight lines.

MRS. ELLEN KEY BLUNT, an unreconstructed Southern lady, is giving Shakespearean readings at Berlin.

MRS. ANNE GILBERT—née Anne Taylor, the last of "the Taylors of Ongar," famous in literature—died on the 20th ult. at the age of 85. *The Original Poems for Infant Minds*, whose continuous republication afforded a handsome annuity to its authors, has made the names of Anne and her sister, Jane Taylor, familiar in every nursery where English is prattled. The last labor of the venerable lady was in connection with the choice poem of this collection—one, indeed, of the most beautiful in the language—that whose refrain is "My mother," an emendation of one of those stanzas she sent last May to *The Athenæum*. Of "the Taylors of Ongar," her mother, wife of Rev. Isaac Taylor, was a popular author of the last century; her uncle, Charles Taylor, became conspicuous for his learning as editor of *Calmet*; her brother Isaac wrote numerous philosophical and religious works, of which *The Natural History of Enthusiasm* and *The Physical Theory of Another Life* are, perhaps, best known; her brother Jeffrey wrote anonymously, *The Apostolic Age in Britain* being among his ablest productions. The Rev. Joseph Gilbert, the husband of the lady, was also an author, and one of his brothers has left a manuscript account of Captain Cook's North-west Passage expedition, on which he was an officer. Her son Mr. Josiah Gilbert is one of the authors of a much commended work on the Dolomite Mountains; her son Dr. Henry Gilbert is best known through his *Elucidations of Agricultural Chemistry*; while still other authors are among her family connections. Such a record for a single family is too remarkable to pass without notice.

A CORRESPONDENT of *The Pall Mall Gazette* makes one of Shelley's notes to his *Queen Mab* the starting-point for some interesting speculations on the origin of the poem. The note in question consists of a description in prose of the Wandering Jew, to which is appended the remark: "This fragment is the translation of some German work, whose title I have vainly endeavored to discover. I picked it up dirty and torn some years ago in Lincoln's Inn Fields." The German work, it appears, is *Der ewige Jude*, "a lyrical rhapsody," by the German poet Schubart, which was printed among his collected poems at Vienna in 1785, while *Queen Mab* was written when Shelley was eighteen years old—say in 1810. The theory is that Shelley had read the whole poem, which was probably not translated into English, before writing

Queen Mab. Thus, for instance, he names the Wandering Jew "Ahasuerus," as Schubart had done, though this name had been till then by no means uniformly applied to him; and in a French ballad recounting his apparition in Dauphiné in 1773 he is called "Isaac Laquedem." But it is in the alleged fragmentary condition of the extract that the interest centres. Besides an interpolation, the last lines of the original are dropped, and others of Shelley's composition substituted. The added words which conclude the quotation in the note are:

"Then let it thunder upon me; command a hurricane to sweep me down to the foot of Carmel, that I may there lie extended; may pain and writhe and die."

The seven lines omitted from the original literally rendered, read:

"And Ahasuerus sank. There was a sound in his ears; night covered his bristly eyelashes; an angel bore him back to the cave. 'Sleep there now,' said the angel. 'Ahasuerus, sleep sweet sleep; God is not wrathful for ever. When thou awakes, he is there whose blood thou sawest flow on Golgotha, and who pardons even thee.'"

These lines, it will be observed, make the Christian God a god of mercy, whereas Shelley's substitution makes him a god of wrath—the character given him throughout *Queen Mab*. In reference to the return to Mount Carmel common to Shelley and Schubart, the writer in closing his letter observes:

"This likeness amid so much unlikeness can scarcely be the result of mere coincidence, but proves the supposition that the translator had seen the untranslated lines, and that these were intentionally omitted. The fragment that was picked up in Lincoln's Inn Fields was probably a portion of the book containing Schubart's collected poems, but there is every reason to believe that it comprised the whole of the particular poem translated in the note to *Queen Mab*."

"VALENTINE VERITY"—whoever he is—has essayed the task to which Mr. Harry Morford, among others, once addressed himself, that of "completing *Don Juan*," which he has done in stanzas which show that, to use the words of *The Athenæum*, "of the wit, the fancy, the pathos, and the licentiousness which characterized Lord Byron's poem, the present writer has only the last." We have alluded to Mr. "Verity," however, for the purpose of quoting the conclusive manner in which *The Athenæum* disposes of the trite expedient of authors who desire to disarm their critics in advance—a refuge which Dr. Holmes and Miss Augusta Evans have sought, in common with Mr. Charles Reade—which in this instance is met in manner following:

"It is likely enough that 'Valentine Verity' will impute our strictures to resentment at the sarcasms which he has levelled at his critics in advance. The intellect which could produce his invectives is precisely of the kind which could believe they would sting. We must not deny him an example:

"An' if ye cavil when we coin a word,
Or put a syllable or two too much in;
Or when a *bizarre* rhyme may chance be heard;
Or, leaving rhyme, when we would be more touching,
We choose some 'clumsy cuttings' (though absurd
They may be christen'd by some rev'rend urchin);
Know ye, it suits our purpose, or caprice—
We care not for the cackling of geese."

"We, however, object to it, and shall quote no further."

PROF. SEELEY's authorship of *Eccle Homo*—first confidently announced by *The Spectator*, and then made the occasion for publishing his biography and selling his photograph in every direction—is denied by the publisher of the book, who says that its real authorship is still a secret. In addition to several rejoinders of which we have previously made mention, another has been published in London styled *Eccle Homo and Its Detractors*.

FIVE letters from Lord Chesterfield, hitherto unpublished, have come into the possession of the editor of *The Athenæum* and will be published in that journal.

JOSEPH ROBERTSON, LL.D., a Scotch antiquarian, historian, editor, and political writer, died last month at the age of fifty-six.

MR. F. T. PALGRAVE is writing a biographical and critical memoir of Sir Walter Scott to accompany Macmillan's forthcoming edition of his poems.

MR. GRANT DUFF, M.P., has been elected Lord Rector of the University of Aberdeen over Mr. Grote, the casting vote having been given by the Chancellor, the Duke of Richmond.

PROF. WEIL, of the University of Heidelberg, has just published a history of the Mohammedan nation (*Völker von Mohammed*) to the sixteenth century, based chiefly upon his own former voluminous works.

DR. G. W. LEITNER, principal of the Lahore College, as the result of a tour in portions of Tibet which no other European has ever visited, has collected for publication a number of vocabularies of Dardistan dialects, which, together with a description of his travels, he will publish on his return to Europe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Announcements cannot be made unless received on or before the Saturday preceding the date of publication.

MURPHY & Co., Baltimore:

A Manual of the Lives of the Popes, from St. Peter to Pius IX.

J. P. SKELLY & Co., Philadelphia:

Ritter Bell, the Cripple.
George Wayland, the Little Medicine Carrier.
The Cabin in the Brush. By the author of Mabel and Tara, Marion through the Brush, etc.

LAWRENCE KENOE, New York:

Three Phases of Christian Love—namely, Life of St. Monica, Life of Victorine de Galar, Life of Venerable More Devos. By Lady Herbert.

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & Co., Philadelphia:

Under Two Flags. By Onida.
Old Sir Douglas. By the Hon. Mrs. Norton.
Dainty Dishes.
Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence. By Heros von Borcke.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

Correspondents of Notes and Queries are reminded that no communications to THE ROUND TABLE will be read by the Editors if they are not authenticated by the writer's signature.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: Every one is familiar with Coleridge's beautiful poem *Work without Hope*, which begins in this way:

"All Nature seems at work. Buzza leave their hair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter, slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of spring,
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing."

I believe it has not been noticed that the germ of this fine passage is contained in one of George Herbert's poems, where he discourses as follows:

"All things are busy; only I
Neither bring honey with the bees,
Nor flower to make that, nor the husbandrie
To water these."

Coleridge in another poem of his, called *The Garden of Boccaccio*, speaks in one place of

"Forests, where beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn."

The boar is made to figure in the poets very often in this way, but Ovid's line, after all, has never been excelled:

"Dentibus ille ferox in querno stipite tritis
Imminet exitio."

Coleridge's *Epitaph on an Infant* has always been admired:

"Ere sin could blight or sorrow fade,
Death came with friendly care;
The opening bud to heaven conveyed,
And bade it blossom there."

I am not sure, however, that the following verso from Henry Vaughan is not quite as good. It occurs in his poem *The Burial of an Infant*, and if it did not suggest the above epitaph from Coleridge, it is very much like it:

"Sweetly didst thou expire: thy soul
Flew home unstain'd by his new kin;
For ere thou knew'st how to be foul,
Death wend'd thee from the world and sin."

Yours truly,

CYG.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: In answer to a query in your columns as to the origin and meaning of

"Astra, castra, munus, lumen,"

—it is the motto of the heroic Scottish house of Lyndsay, renowned in song and story. *Munus* is sometimes added.

In the total absence of verbs and prepositions, one can only guess the signification of this laconic motto. It has been translated, "Under the stars (à la pique étoile) is my camp, and God is my light and my fortress." Your correspondent will find "cleanliness is next to godliness" in the works of Jeremy Taylor.

Yours,

L. M. N.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

DEAR SIR: Thanks in advance to any one who will inform me who is the translator of the following beautiful sonnet from the Italian of Vincenzo da Filicaja. It first appeared in *The London Examiner* of March 10, 1816, under the title of *Providence*:

"Just as a mother, with sweet, pious face,
Yields to her tender little children from her seat—
Gives one a kiss, another an embrace,
Takes this upon her knee, that on her feet,
And, while from actions, looks, complaints, pretences,
She learns their feeling, and their various will,
To this a look, to that a word, dispenses,
And whether stern or smiling, loves them still;
So Providence—for us high, infinite—
Makes our necessities its watchful task,
Hearkens to all our prayers, helps all our wants;
And 'e'en if it denies what seems our right,
Either denies because 'twould have us ask,
Or seems but to deny, or in denying—grants."

NEW YORK, January 10, 1867.

Y. X.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: The lines to which your correspondent "Pla-aller" refers, in your issue of the 5th inst., were written by Rev. Horatio Bonar and published in a volume entitled *Hymn of Faith and Hope*. The stanza is:

"Thou must be true thyself,
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy heart must overflow, if thou
Another heart wouldst reach;
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech."

Respectfully yours,

R. A. C.

PITTSBURG, PA., January 12, 1866.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ROUND TABLE:

SIR: In looking through Thoreau's *Walden* for the concluding verses of *Lycidas*, mentioned by a querist in your issue for December 23d, ult. (which quotation, by the way, I did not find), I came upon the address to *The Wood Fire*, beginning:

"Never, bright flame, may be denied to me."

Who was the author of these beautiful verses?

T.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., January 8, 1867.

THE ROUND TABLE.

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SATURDAY, JAN. 12.

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AND AMERICAN LITERATURE,
FAST YACHTS AND NEWSPAPERS, A CURE FOR SCEP-
TICISM, OTHELLO AT THE WINTER GARDEN.

CORRESPONDENCE:
LONDON.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:
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BISHOPS, LITERARY FUND ASSOCIATION.

REVIEWS:
A PIETIST POET, LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN WIN-
THROP, THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION,
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SOUTHERN POETRY OF THE WAR, ANNALS OF A QUIET
NEIGHBORHOOD,
AUTHENTICITY OF THE GOSPELS, GRAY'S POEMS,
THE MAGAZINES.

LITERARIANA.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

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TUESDAY, January 15.

ENLARGEMENT AND PROGRESS.

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1867. PROSPECTUS. 1867.

"The Round Table's" Arrangements and Proposals for the New Year, 1867.

TO SUBSCRIBERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

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During the three years that have passed since the first publication of THE ROUND TABLE, it has experienced an unusually diversified career, making not only strong friends, but some bitter enemies; yet the number of the latter has ever been comparatively small, and it is hoped and believed that there are now very few who do not wish well to a Journal so earnestly devoted to literary, social, and artistic progress.

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